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Richard Mikhailovich Portuguese Alexandrovich **Valentine**
Runov "Boilers" of the 45th Richard
Portuguese, Valentin Runov "Boilers" of the 45th
Encirclement - isolation of the enemy grouping from the rest of
his troops in order to destroy or capture. Military encyclopedic
dictionary. M., 2007. P. 645 **Introduction** The
Great

Patriotic War sharply set the Soviet leadership the task of defeating the enemy. But in practice, it turned out to be very difficult to solve it. The lack of forces affected, and even more so - the art of war. Therefore, in the first offensive operations, we were only able to repel the enemy somewhat. But enemy losses with this method of action turned out to be insignificant. Subsequently, having created tank armies, Soviet troops were able to pursue the enemy, strike at him not only

from the front, but go out to the flanks and even go to the rear. Conditions were created for the encirclement of large enemy groupings with the aim of their subsequent defeat or

captivity.

Encirclement as one of the methods of armed struggle has been known to mankind for a long time. It was first used during the 2nd Punic War near Cannes as early as 216 BC. e. Carthaginian general Hannibal. Using cavalry, he managed to cover both flanks of the Roman army, which lost 48 thousand killed and about 10 thousand captured in 12 hours of battle. The losses of the Carthaginian army amounted to less than 6 thousand people.

Since then, "Cannes" has become synonymous with the encirclement and defeat of a large enemy grouping in subsequent millennia in the history of wars, the outcome of which was the encirclement with further destruction or capture of the enemy. And these encirclements, as the means of armed struggle improved, acquired an ever greater scope. There is evidence that Alexander Nevsky used

encirclement during the defeat of the German knights on Lake Peipus in 1242. Later, military leaders of various countries practiced encirclement (siege) of fortress cities, which they took by storm or starve.

With the advent of mass armies, the practice of ancient Cannes is being revived - the encirclement and destruction of enemy forces in an open field. An example of this method of defeating the enemy, in particular, was the operations of Russian troops in the Patriotic War of 1812. Then large French forces were surrounded near Vyazma (loss of killed and captured over 19 thousand people), near Lyakhovo (lost more than 10 thousand people), near Krasnoye (lost 6 thousand killed and 26 thousand prisoners).

In the first half of the XIX century.

the theoretical foundations for the preparation and conduct of operations to encircle and destroy the enemy were developed. Considerable merit in this belonged to the Prussian General K. Clausewitz, who in 1812-1813. was in the Russian service. He outlined his reasoning on this issue in the work "On War", which was published in German and studied before the revolution in military academies. It appeared in the Soviet Union in a Russian translation only in 1937.

This does not mean that in the 20s and 30s. Soviet military leaders ignored such an effective way to defeat the enemy as encirclement. Many of them remembered how in 1914, as a result of

encirclement by the Germans, the 2nd Russian Army of General A.V. Samsonov was defeated, how a large grouping of Turkish troops was surrounded and captured by General N.

N. Yudenich in 1915 during the Sarakamysh operation. In 1939, the operation to encircle the Japanese troops was carried out by the Soviet troops under the leadership of G.K. Zhukov on the Khalkin Gol River. During this operation, the decisive role was played by mobile tank formations, which (like Hannibal's cavalry) acted on the flanks and advanced in converging directions. But already in the course of this operation, which on the whole ended successfully, a number of serious questions were raised that required an urgent solution. In particular, the operation on the Khalkin-Gol River and the outbreak of World War II gave impetus to the deployment of mechanized corps in the Red Army, each of which was supposed to have 1031 tanks. These corps, acting as part of a deep army offensive operation, had to develop a breakthrough in the front line of the enemy's defense, carried out by the infantry, and rapidly develop an offensive in depth, reaching the flanks, going into the rear of the enemy grouping and thereby creating conditions for its encirclement. But that was just a theory. In practice, the Soviet command never managed such large mobile formations, and did not have the means to manage them. It is quite clear that in the course of a deep and highly dynamic

operation, it was not necessary to rely on wired communications for the environment, and radio stations were

Very

few, and only a few were able to work with them. The German command had a different attitude towards the preparation of encirclement operations. Having mastered their theory, the fascist military leaders began to prepare in the most serious way for the practical conduct of such operations. Along with the deployment of tank troops, airborne assault forces are being prepared and radio control facilities are being widely introduced. Cadres are "trained" to carry out deep operations and actions in isolation from the main forces. All this

undergoes extensive testing already in the autumn of 1939 during the occupation of Poland. In 1940, the Nazis carried out successful encirclement operations on the Western Front, and the British in North Africa.

By the beginning of the summer of 1941, the political leadership of the USSR and the high command of the Red Army knew about Germany's preparations for war with the Soviet Union. An operational plan was hurriedly developed to cover the western borders, and fortified areas were built along the new border. At the same time, the General Staff of the Red Army, headed by General of the Army G.K. Zhukov from the beginning of 1941, did practically nothing to withdraw large groups of Soviet troops from the enemy's attack. Moreover, the plans for covering the state border were not communicated to the corps, divisions, regiments, battalions, which were to directly solve combat missions. Thus, as the main organizer of the Red Army administration, Chief of the General Staff G.K. Zhukov not only did nothing to protect subordinate troops from powerful enemy attacks, but also in the most drastic form suppressed any initiative of individual commanders related to bringing troops in combat readiness and their occupation of defense lines before the start of the war. The same policy was pursued by the commanders of the western military districts, most of whom are in this position

were less than one year and in every possible way wanted to prove their

willingness to follow the instructions of higher management, despite their obvious fallacy. By June 22,

1941, the German command, which already had a certain practice of preparing and conducting large-scale encirclement operations, had studied the situation of the Soviet troops quite well and was aware of the low professional qualities of its senior command staff, developed a number of deep offensive operations, which, with favorable development, should have culminate in the encirclement and defeat of large enemy groupings. And such operations were successfully carried out. In June 1941, the troops of the 10th Army of the Western Front were surrounded in the Bialystok area. In June and July, three more armies of the Western Front in the Minsk region fell into the encirclement. In August 1941, the encirclement and defeat of the troops of three armies in the Ukraine in the Uman region

took place. In September 1941 ceased to exist

the main grouping of troops of the Southwestern Front, surrounded by the enemy in the Kyiv region. Then, in the same 1941, Soviet troops were surrounded and defeated in the area of Vyazma, Bryansk. The attempt of the Soviet command to encircle the enemy in late 1941 - early 1942 during the counteroffensive near Moscow was not successful. The neglect of the basic laws of military art had an effect: a detailed study of the opposing enemy, the concentration of forces in decisive directions, the rapid development of tactical success by mobile troops and, most importantly, operational and reliable command and control of troops. It was precisely the shortcomings in management that made the counteroffensive of the Soviet troops near Moscow an operation that, although politically advantageous, was very flawed from the outside.

military art.

Nevertheless, the fascist command learned the lessons learned near Moscow and henceforth became more careful in conducting its offensive operations. At the same time, the Moscow victory at the Soviet command created the illusion of a possible easy and quick victory over the enemy. The consequence of this was the encirclement of the group of General Kostenko in the Barvenkovo region in May 1942, the 2nd shock army of General A. A. Vlasov in June 1942 north of Lake Ilmen, the 9th and 38th armies in the Millerovo region in July 1942 d. Military failures required the Soviet leadership to constantly improve the organization and armament of their troops, to promote the most talented military leaders to the highest positions and to develop operations in compliance with all the rules of military art. As a result, in late 1942 - early 1943, the Soviet command finally prepared and carried out a major operation to encircle the enemy in the Stalingrad region. As a result of this operation, the 6th German Army of Field Marshal Paulus, consisting of 22 divisions and 330 thousand people, was defeated in the Stalingrad region. Over 91,000 enemy soldiers and officers were taken prisoner. In

1943 and 1944 Soviet troops carried out a number of successful operations to encircle and defeat large enemy groupings. In the Ostrogozhsk-Rossosh operation (13-27.01.1943) 13 enemy divisions were defeated, in the Voronezh-Kastornenskaya

(24.01-17.02.1943) - 11 divisions, in Korsun-Shevchenkovsky
(24.01-17.02.1944) - 10 divisions, in Vitebsk-Orsha (23-26.06.1944) - 5
divisions, in Bobruisk (24-29.06.1944) - over 6 divisions, in Minsk
(29.06-4.07.1944) - 20 formations, in Lvov-Sandomierz (13.07-29.08.1944)
- 8 divisions, in Yassko-Kishinev (20-29.08.1944) - 18 divisions. Each
of these operations had its own characteristic features, which were
studied in detail and taken into account in the conduct of subsequent
actions. Thus, by the

end of 1944 and the beginning of 1945, the Soviet command
approached, already having extensive experience in preparing and
conducting major operations to encircle enemy troops in various
situational conditions. It widely used this experience to complete the
defeat of the enemy and victory in the Great Patriotic War. In the
postwar years, this experience was deeply studied in various military
academies of the world and widely cultivated in the practice of training
commanding staffs and troops.

Chapter 1 Hitler's Headquarters. Autumn 1944 - winter 1945

In the autumn of 1944, the sixth and last year of the Second World War began. Building on the success of the summer operations, the Red Army by this time had liberated almost the entire Soviet Baltic, Romania, Bulgaria, most of Yugoslavia, the eastern part of Hungary, Czechoslovakia, crossed the German border in East Prussia, defeated the enemy in the Far North, and entered Norway. During the summer-autumn campaign, all the main strategic enemy groupings were defeated - the army groups "North", "Center", "Northern Ukraine", "Southern Ukraine" ("South"). On the Soviet-German front, the enemy lost more than 450 divisions - three-quarters of all the forces of the fascist bloc (1). By that time, the Red Army had advanced 600-900 km to the west. As a result, Germany lost its sources of raw materials and food in

the previously occupied areas. Almost all of its allies were withdrawn from the war.

Only in the part of the Hungarian territory occupied by the Wehrmacht did the puppet government cooperate with it.

Salashists.

The second half of 1944 was characterized by the further strengthening of military cooperation between the countries of the anti-Hitler coalition, the expansion of strategic interaction between the Soviet Armed Forces and the American-British troops in Europe. The main feature of the armed struggle outside the Soviet-German front during this period was the opening by the USA and Britain of a second front in Europe and the intensification of their combat operations in the Pacific and Asia.

The American-British command carried out a major landing operation in Normandy. By the end of 1944, fascist troops were completely expelled from France, Belgium, Luxembourg, as well as parts of Italy and from many regions of Holland. Total area liberated by Allied and local forces

The resistance of the territory amounted to 600 thousand square meters. km with a population of about 76 million people. As a result of the offensive, the Allied troops on the 660-kilometer sector of the front took advantageous positions for a direct invasion of Germany. They destroyed 35 enemy divisions. During the fighting on the territory of France and Italy from June to the end of 1944, the irretrievable losses of the Nazi troops amounted to 520 thousand people

(2). The policy and strategy of the leadership of Germany, as evidenced by the speeches of a number of its leaders, in the autumn of 1944 proceeded from the actual recognition that the war was lost. The only question was how to find the most acceptable exit for Germany from the war. The ruling political elite saw it as a further prolongation of the armed struggle, hoping for a split in the anti-fascist coalition. Hitler, knowing about the existence of contradictions on certain problems between the USSR, on the one hand, and the USA and England, on the other, tried by all means to kindle them. He was convinced that the existing contradictions would lead to the collapse of the union between them. At the end of August 1944, he asserted: "The time will come when the tension between the allies will reach such an extent that a break will be inevitable. History shows that all coalitions, sooner or later, inevitably broke up.

Based on such political premises, the Wehrmacht command built its strategic plan for 1945. It consisted in concentrating the main forces on the Soviet-German front and relying on well-prepared in-depth defense in advance to prevent the advance of Soviet troops deep into Germany. On the Western Front, the Nazi leadership strove to keep the initiative at all costs, which could change the situation in favor of Germany. On December 28, 1944, when discussing the plan of attack on Alsace, Hitler stated: "If we want to bring the situation in line with the prospect we have outlined, we need to understand the following: we must inflict a decisive defeat on any one of the world powers opposing us - Russia , England or America".

Since in the Ardennes region it was not possible to achieve the intended goal with a single blow, the Supreme High Command intended to carry out its plan with several operations, during which

it was supposed to destroy in parts the American divisions located south of the penetration area in the Ardennes. The first such operation was planned in Alsace and on the Upper Rhine, mainly against the weakened 7th American Army. After that, it was supposed to resume the offensive on the Meuse. The German leadership sought to

disrupt the plans of the American-British command by offensive actions, buy time and get the opportunity to regroup part of the forces to repel the expected offensive of the Red Army. According to the political and military leadership of Germany, all this was to force the US and British governments to change their policy towards the Reich. At the same time, it was well aware that the fulfillment of the planned plans depended primarily on how events would develop on the Soviet-German front. He was given top priority. By the beginning of 1945, the Nazi command assessed the situation on the Soviet German front as follows: "Given the long preparation time, which allowed the enemy to significantly replenish and prepare his troops, as well as far-reaching plans (Prague, Breslau, Poznan, Graudenz, Danzig and ultimately Berlin), it should be expected that the Soviet leadership intends to deliver a decisive blow for the course of the entire war in the upcoming offensive operation in order to destroy the German army in the east.

The Hitlerite command believed that the Red Army would first undertake an operation to destroy the blockaded group in Courland, and then go on the offensive in East Prussia. At the same time, an offensive by Soviet troops was expected in southern Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary, and on the central sector of the front, from Warsaw to the Sandomierz bridgehead, only fettering actions were expected. From this assessment of the situation, the grouping of the fascist German armies was determined and the defense was rapidly prepared.

Meeting in the "Wolf's Lair" on July 9 and 11, 1944. 07/09/1944.

12.00 Wolfschanze main headquarters (A limited circle of people is present at the meeting: from the Navy - only the commander in chief; from the Eastern Front - Field Marshal Model, General Frisner, Colonel General Ritter von Greim.)

The topic of the meeting was "Stabilization of the situation in the central part of the Eastern Front, where a very serious situation has developed." The question of the withdrawal of Army Group North was not discussed at this meeting, since this cannot be done in the summer without heavy losses, as the experience of the Central Front (4th Army) showed. In summer conditions, the enemy can pursue the German troops on a wide front, advancing over open terrain and without roads, and thus, through the gaps that have arisen, overtake the retreating armies and isolate them. In addition, the withdrawal of Army Group North with military equipment will require at least four weeks, and this, given the current crisis, will be too late. To restore the situation, it is proposed to bring new divisions to the wedged areas until 07/17/1944. The front command believes that in this way it will be possible to stop the advance of the enemy, preventing the isolation of Army Group North (3).

The crushing blows of the Red Army at the beginning of 1945 against the enemy in Poland, East Prussia, Hungary and other sectors of the Soviet-German front forced the Nazi leadership to forget about their offensive plans on the Western Front. The very next day after the transition of Soviet troops to a new strategic offensive in Poland, the idea of the so-called new phase of the struggle for great Germany was born at the headquarters of the Design Bureau, according to which it was envisaged "to concentrate the overwhelming part of the armed forces for the great decisive battle in the Eastern theater of operations, consciously resigning ourselves to associated with this heavy risk in the Western theater of operations" (4).

At the headquarters of the OKW, it was decided to urgently transfer 42 divisions (5) to the East from Germany, Norway, Italy, the Balkans and from the Western Front. The motives for this decision are quite clearly stated in the book of the German General K. Toppelskirch "History of the Second World War". "If it was worth continuing the war at all," it says, "it was only to stop the red stream in the east and, if possible, throw it back. There was hope that it would still be possible to find some kind of common political line with the Western powers, while the last barriers in the east had not yet been broken through" (6). The Hitlerite clique, straining its last efforts in the war, tried to get in the person of the Anglo-American command

an ally who would help her in stopping the victorious offensive of the Red Army. So, the chief of staff of the OKW, Field Marshal V. Keitel, counting on the commonality of class interests, turned to the command of the allied forces in Europe with a telegram in which, on behalf of the commanders of all three types of armed forces (Hitler was the commander-in-chief of the ground forces), he asked for a truce in the Western front for 100 days, in order to concentrate all forces against the Red Army during this time and deliver a "decisive blow" to it between the Oder and the Vistula (7). Until February 12, 1945, 33 divisions

arrived at the location of the German army groups defending in the Berlin direction and in Hungary, including 15 divisions (8 infantry, 6 tank and 1 motorized) from the Western Front. Until January 13, the Western Front handed over to the Eastern Front 4 infantry divisions (344, 269, 711 and 712th). Then, from January 13 to 29, according to data from the military diary of the OKW, the 6th SS Panzer Army, consisting of two corps and four tank divisions, the Führer Grenadier Brigade and the Führer Escort Brigade were withdrawn from the Ardennes ledge and sent to the East. On January 24, the transfer from West to East of the 27th and 28th SS Volunteer Infantry Divisions began, on January 31 - the 21st Panzer and 25th Motorized Divisions, on February 1 - the 10th SS Panzer Division. In addition, from January 14 to 25, the Western Front transferred to the Eastern Front five people's artillery corps (401, 402, 403, 405 and 408), two mortar brigades (17 and 19), ten bridge parks and a number of units special branches of the military. The 163rd, 164th and 199th divisions stationed in Denmark, which the OKW had previously expected to use in a counteroffensive on the Western Front, were also sent to the Soviet-German front on January 25. The transfer from the Western European theater of operations to the East of air units from the West Aviation Command, which

began on January 6, was in full swing. From January 12 to January 20, only 3 fighter squadrons were transferred to the 6th Air Fleet. Then, from January 21 to February 3, another 5 new squadrons of fighter aircraft arrived at his disposal, including the 300th and 301st elite squadrons from the Western Front, as well as numerous assault and reconnaissance units.

aviation. As a result, the strength of the 6th Air Fleet, despite heavy losses, increased from 12 January to 3 February from 800 to 1838 aircraft. By that time, two-thirds of the most combat-ready formations of the German Air Force were used against the Red Army. In addition, the fascist German command sent to the East from Germany and from the Western Front in February 1945 more than 430 anti-aircraft artillery batteries, including 123 heavy batteries.

Noteworthy is the statistics of deliveries of military equipment produced in Germany. Thus, in January 1945, 291 tanks arrived in Western Europe, and 1,328 in the East. In February, 67 tanks were sent to the Western Front, 20 to Italy, and 1,555 to the Soviet-German front. It should be taken into account that in January - February, 800 tanks and assault guns (8) also left the Western Front to the East as part of the tank ones. The

need to replenish losses on the fronts did not allow the fascist command to create large strategic reserves. This forced the fascist German command in the summer of 1944 to reduce the number of Wehrmacht tank and infantry divisions. At the same time, SS Reichsführer Himmler, who headed the "reserve army", authorized the formation of the so-called people's grenadier divisions. Until November 1944, 51 such formations (9) were created and sent to the army in the field. Their personnel were recruited from military personnel of defeated divisions, disbanded aviation and navy units, as well as from persons who had previously not been subject to conscription for military service either due to age (elderly and adolescents) or for health reasons. The combat effectiveness of these formations was lower than that of conventional infantry divisions, so they were mainly used only in defensive operations. In September 1944, one of the Nazi leaders M. Bormann,

on behalf of Hitler, set about creating a special militia - the Volkssturm. All men from 16 to 65 years old, previously declared unfit for service, were subject to conscription into its ranks. By the beginning of 1945, there were 1.5 million people in the Volkssturm (10). But the Volkssturm lacked both weapons and experienced commanders. At the head of the militia units were, as a rule, not regular military men, but leaders of local Nazis.

From Hitler's decree of September 29, 1944 on the creation of the Volkssturm "After five years of hardest fighting, due to the withdrawal of all our European allies, the enemy on some fronts is near or on the German border itself. He is exerting all his strength to smash our empire and destroy the German people and their social order. His ultimate goal is the eradication of German man.

As in the autumn of 1939, we again stand all alone at the front in the face of our enemies. In the course of a few years, we then succeeded, by putting into action for the first time the enormous forces of the people, to solve the most difficult military problems, to ensure the security of the empire and thereby Europe for years. While the enemy is preparing to deliver the final blow, we have decided to bring into action for the second time the entire huge mass of our people. Relying solely on our own forces, as in 1939-1941, we can and must succeed not only in frustrating the enemy's plans of destruction, but also again throwing them back and holding them until the future of Germany, her allies and the the most durable peace in Europe^ I order: To form in all regions of the Greater

German Empire

a German Volkssturm from all able-bodied men aged 16-60 years. He will defend his native land with all available means.

Formation and leadership of the German Volkssturm in areas are taken over by Gauleiters.

Those called up to the Volkssturm for the period of hostilities are soldiers in accordance with military laws.

The National Socialist Party is fulfilling its honorable highest duty to the German people by bringing its organizations to the forefront as the main carriers of this struggle. Combat provisions of the

German Volkssturm: 1. Loyalty, obedience and courage form the basis of the state and make it irresistible. True to his oath, the Volkssturm soldier fights fiercely in all positions, with faith in victory. Being faithful to the Führer to the grave, he prefers to die in battle rather than ever ask the enemy for mercy. Being unsurpassed in

2. its resilience,
dedication and camaraderie, the Volkssturm is

army of Germany's greatest idealists. 3. If

any commander in a hopeless situation decides to stop the fight, then in this case the traditional custom of our brave warrior sailors operates in the German Volkssturm. The command of the unit is transferred to the one who wants to continue the fight, be it even the youngest. Text of the Volkssturm soldier's oath: I

make this sacred oath before God

that I will be unquestioningly faithful and obedient to the Greater German Empire, to Adolf Hitler. I solemnly promise that I will bravely fight for my homeland and would rather die than give up my freedom, thereby leaving the social future of my people to the mercy of fate.

The fascist leadership decided to gather and throw all available forces on the Oder. Goering pompously announced that the Air Force was allocating 100 thousand people to defend Berlin, Himmler immediately offered 12 thousand SS men, Doenitz - 6 thousand people from the navy. Hitler announced that the 12 new divisions created from these forces would constitute the strategic reserve of the High Command for the defense of Berlin. General Krebs informed the audience that a few days ago on the Elbe, in the area of Dessau-Wittenberg, the formation of a new 12th Army, the command of which was entrusted to General Wenck, had been hastily begun. The staff of officers' schools in Central Germany and young people from labor camps are being transferred to the army. Seven divisions of the army - the Panzer Division ^ (Clausewitz), the motorized division "Schlageter" and the infantry divisions ^ (Potsdam, Scharnhorst, Ulrich von Hutten, Friedrich Ludwig Jahn "and" Theodor Kerner "- were also to form a reserve All units of the reserve army, cadets of military schools, young men born in 1928, who were in the camps of the "Labor Front" were sent to the front by order of the Higher Military Command. provinces of 200 Volkssturmist battalions, and the

SS officer Utter - to create special barrage units - ^ Heimatwehr in the rear of the Army Group ^ Vistula ". The Nazi authorities appealed to German women and

girls - to join the organization of the auxiliary service for the Volkssturm. As early as February

13, 1945, emergency courts-martial, created in accordance with a special decree of Hitler, began to rage throughout the territory subject to the Nazis. They consisted of a military judge and two officers. Their sentence usually read: execution or hanging - and was carried out immediately. 7,000 people fell victim to these trials. In an address to the Wehrmacht on March 11, Hitler ordered "the fanatically destroy all who try to contradict us" (12).

The leadership of the Wehrmacht made every effort to prolong the resistance in the East, at any cost to slow down the advance of the Red Army to the West. Due to the reserves being formed and the transfer of forces from other fronts, it was able to largely make up for its losses in the summer and autumn of 1944 on the Soviet-German front, concentrating two-thirds of all active armed forces there. By the beginning of 1945 there were 169 divisions (including 22 armored and 9 motorized) and 20 Wehrmacht brigades. Together with the German troops, 16 divisions and one brigade of the Hungarian army operated. Taking into account the Hungarian formations, Germany on the Eastern Front had 3.7 million people, more than 56 thousand guns, 8.1 thousand tanks and assault guns, over 4 thousand aircraft. The density of the German defense, despite the huge losses of the Wehrmacht, remained high. This was explained by the fact that the line of the Soviet German front during the summer-autumn offensive of the Soviet troops was halved - to 2200 km. In July - September 1944, Hitler's Headquarters developed two documents that deserve attention: an order to prepare

the defense of the Reich and an order to "fanatize" the struggle. The first of them described in detail the tasks facing certain types and branches of the troops, administrative structures, state officials. In its introductory part, the principles of the responsibility of military and economic authorities for the organization of ongoing measures for the defense of Germany are determined.

"Order of the OKW on the preparation of the defense of the Reich Chief of the Supreme High Command of the Armed Forces. Operational Headquarters

leadership of the armed forces. Quartermaster 2. Office 1. No. 007715/44.
On the subject: the preparation of the defense of the

Reich. Headquarters of the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces,
07/19/1944. Top secret.

The orders issued so far on the preparation of the defense of the sea coast and the land borders of the Reich are summarized and supplemented by this order.

In their activities relating to preparatory measures, the branches of the armed forces must be guided by the principle that their competence includes only purely military matters, while the tasks of mobilizing all forces on the territory of Germany, which has become a theater of operations, as well as training personnel and especially measures related to the evacuation of the German civilian population are exclusively the tasks of party authorities. Measures in the field of economy should be carried out by the relevant higher instances of state administration. The necessary coordination of the activities of the listed instances must, however, exist in the interests of the common cause, regardless of their sphere of competence_ "(13)

That order defined as one of the main tasks the mobilization of the population of cities and villages in Germany for a stubborn struggle against the enemy. "Order on

the "fantasy" of the struggle Headquarters of the Fuhrer,
09/21/1944 National Socialist Party. Head of the party
office.

Circular letter 255/44. Content: total combat. The commander of the
troops in the West sent me the following telegram, which I, on behalf of the
Führer, am sending to the Gauleiters for strict execution.

M. Borman

1. Appendix. Mailing list: Reichsleiters, Gauleiters, formation
commanders True: (signature illegible)

Registration card: armed forces - combat use. Serial number: 890

Appendix to circular letter

255/44 dated 9/21/1944 Copy

The Führer ordered: since the fighting in many areas has spread to German territory and the German cities and villages have found themselves in a combat zone, it is necessary to fantasize the conduct of our battles. In the war zone, our struggle should be brought to the utmost tenacity, and the use of every combat-ready person should reach the maximum degree. Every bunker, every quarter of a German city and every German village must be turned into a fortress, at which the enemy will either bleed to death, or the garrison of this fortress will die in hand-to-hand combat under its ruins. It can only be about holding positions or destroying. I ask the Gauleiters to influence the population in a suitable way so that they realize the need for this struggle and its consequences, which will affect everyone. The fierceness of the fighting can force one not only to sacrifice personal property, but also to destroy it for military reasons or lose it in the struggle. In this severe struggle for the existence of the German people, even monuments of art and other cultural values must not be spared. It must be carried through to the end. I know with what boundless self-sacrifice the Gauleiters and all the party organs subordinate

to them give themselves to the service of the Führer and the fatherland. I ask them to assist me in the conduct of hostilities in the sense indicated above^ **Field Marshal Rundstedt "(14)**. Analyzing the production data in Germany,

it is legitimate to draw a number of conclusions. First, the production of rifles and carbines, machine guns, guns and mortars, tanks and assault guns, combat aircraft, compared with the production in 1943, increased by 1.2-1.5 times. Secondly, priority in the production of weapons was given to armored vehicles and aviation. Thirdly, according to some indicators (machine guns, guns, combat aircraft), Germany even surpassed the Soviet Union. Consequently, in the fall of 1944, the Wehrmacht still had a fairly powerful production base, which to a large extent ensured the launch of the army. By the beginning of 1945, the situation with the production of military weapons, equipment, especially ammunition,

as noted at a meeting at Hitler's Headquarters on January 9, had deteriorated sharply. catastrophic

the situation developed with raw materials, regular railway communication ceased. Excerpts from a meeting at Hitler's

Headquarters on January 9, 1945 ^Guderian: The issue of ammunition is very serious. If we now have ammunition at our disposal, then we can do

a colossal lot.

Führer: Now something is beginning to be felt that they never wanted to listen to before - our retreat in the East. If we had not withdrawn from that area, our monthly production would probably now amount to 2-3 million rounds for the Eastern Front alone. Guderian: And every step back across the land of the empire increases it

length. Fuhrer:

All sorts of brilliant ideas were expressed: we, they say, are completely in vain clinging to the island of Crete when there are not enough forces to hold Koenigsberg [Kaliningrad]. It was completely disregarded that I was holding Crete not for my own pleasure, but to control the Balkan states, Turkey. They forgot that Petsamo [Pechenga] was not being held simply for pleasure. Sometimes they say: we can live without nickel. It is not right. It won't work without nickel. For a while we were able to stockpile it. At this expense, we lived for four or five years. Our business is far from being as good as it used to be.

Guderian: That is why the Hungarian territory is so important meaning.

Fuhrer: I am very worried about this circumstance: we are now building jet engines [for Messerschmitt-262 aircraft]; it is still difficult to say to what extent the deterioration of the quality of materials will affect the operation of these engines. In any engine, a part containing 65% nickel is better than one containing only 10%. True, new methods of electrical processing promise the best prospects. But such epoch-making breakthroughs in technology take years" (15). Compared with 1944, fuel production, iron and steel smelting have been reduced by more than three

times. On March 15, 1945, Minister of Armaments Speer presented Hitler with a memorandum in which he reported that in recent weeks the supply of coal to industry

decreased by almost 10 times. The production of gasoline in February 1945 barely reached 9,000 tons, while the monthly requirement of the Nazi Wehrmacht was 40,000 tons. The fall in the extraction and production of the main types of raw materials led to a reduction in the output of military products. By March 1945, it had decreased by 2.5 times compared to the summer of 1944. So, with a monthly requirement of 300 thousand, industry gave the Wehrmacht only 200 thousand rifles. "The economic collapse of the empire is unfolding faster and faster," wrote Speer. "In the next four to eight weeks, the final collapse of the German economy must be reckoned with" (16). The credit system has completely collapsed. By April 21, 1945, Germany's domestic public debt reached an astronomical figure - 376.1 billion marks against 11.5 billion by the time the Nazis came to power and 30 billion marks by the beginning of World War II. The German public debt exceeded by j the entire value of the country's national wealth and more than 4 times the national income before the war.

Unbridled terror raged in the country, which intensified after July 20, 1944, when an unsuccessful attempt was made on Hitler. The Nazis, having suppressed the putsch, mercilessly cracked down on the conspirators and their supporters. The persecution of members of the people's anti-fascist movement, activists of the communist and social democratic parties became even more severe. The so-called special operations followed one after another. Tens of thousands more people were thrown into prisons and concentration camps. Numerous underground groups, the core of the anti-fascist Free Germany movement, were crushed. There were mass shootings. On August 18, in Buchenwald, the leader of the German working class, the chairman of the Central Committee of the KKE, Ernst Thalmann, who had been in fascist dungeons for 11 years, was killed. By bloody massacres, by frenzied chauvinistic demagoguery, the Hitlerite satraps kept the population in obedience.

The isolation of fascist Germany in the international arena increased. Hitler's bloc collapsed. Romania, Bulgaria, Italy and Finland not only severed all ties with the German state, but also began hostilities against it. By the end of 1944, only 9 states maintained diplomatic relations with Germany (before the attack on the USSR, 41 states).

A logical question arises - what did Hitler and his entourage hope for and stake on in such a difficult situation for the country? "From the summer of 1944, I realized that the military had their say," said Field Marshal V. Keitel. "They cannot say the decisive impact on the situation in the future - it was up to politics" (17). As evidenced by the documents, two options

were considered to achieve "an honorable peace for Germany." The first (unlikely) is to enter into peace negotiations with the Soviet Union. The second (main) option is to persuade the US and England to a separate peace. The starting point for both of these options was Hitler's hope for a break in the allied relations between the Soviet Union, the USA and England as the main countries of the anti-Hitler coalition. Supporting Hitler's thoughts, expressed in August 1944, about the "inevitability of a break", the Imperial Foreign Minister G. Himmler made a similar statement a little later. "I believe that in the end the contradictions between England and America, on the one hand, and Russia, on the other, or between Russia and America, on the one hand, and England, on the other, will lead to the fact that this coalition will sooner or later collapse, like all other coalitions. When this happens, no danger will threaten Germany" (18). Understanding that the Soviet Union personified the main threat to the body, some of Hitler's close associates built

illusions about the cessation of the now hopeless armed struggle in the East. The imperial commissioner for total mobilization, the head of the propaganda apparatus of Germany, J. Goebbels, in particular, suggested that Hitler begin "peace negotiations with Stalin" (19).

In July 1944, German Foreign Minister I. Ribbentrop, acting through a message to Sweden under the guise of a "private person" SS Standartenführer P. Kleist, unsuccessfully tried to secretly probe the possibility of establishing contacts with Soviet diplomatic workers. The same attempt was made in October. However, she did not give any results. The Soviet Union always ruled out the possibility of separate negotiations with Nazi Germany, consistently steered a course towards the complete and final defeat of the fascist-militarist

block. It remained true to its allied obligations to the other countries of the anti-Hitler coalition and made a decisive contribution to the just liberation struggle of the peoples against the fascist enslavers.

The plan for concluding a separate peace with the USSR was nothing more than the fruit of the heated imagination of the Nazis, distraught with fear. At the same time, it should be borne in mind that the overwhelming majority of representatives of the fascist elite, who mortally hated the Soviet Union, unconditionally rejected the idea of ending the war in the East. It is of interest only from the point of view that it indicates the calculations of the German fascist leadership to use anti-Soviet tendencies in the policy of the USA and Britain and their danger to the common goals of the anti-Hitler coalition, it shows the confusion and horror of the leaders of Nazi Germany in the face of inevitable retribution and the extent to which they lost the ability to realistically assess the military-political situation that developed at that time in Europe and around the world.

Plans to achieve a separate peace with the United States and Britain in order to avoid total defeat received the greatest circulation in Germany. They were based on taking into account the traditional anti-Soviet orientation of the policy of the Western powers, as well as the differences between the United States and Britain, on the one hand, and the USSR, on the other, on issues of the post-war order of the world. Diplomatic contacts in this direction were carried out in the deepest secrecy. Only after the war did little information about them become public knowledge. Documents revealing the specific content of the negotiations of that period were either destroyed or are still hidden behind seven seals in the safes of the relevant departments of the United States and England. Nevertheless, there are data that shed light on the nature of the negotiations between Nazi Germany and the Western powers.

In this regard, the surviving secret document of the Imperial Chancellery dated September 3, 1943, entitled ^ (Political considerations in case Germany cannot survive in this war, "is of interest. It frankly outlines the likely ways to prevent the defeat of fascism by the Soviet Union. In particular, the Nazis considered it possible even before the defeat of the fascist bloc to agree on the establishment of US domination over Germany

and all allied or subjugated countries of Europe up to their transformation into a "North Atlantic protectorate". Hitler's politicians

were ready in difficult conditions, choosing "the lesser of two evils", to recognize the supremacy of the United States in the imperialist world, so that under this cover "not to be afraid of Russia" and its "Bolshevik ideology". In this way, they sought to avoid the weakening of fascist Germany, to preserve its prospects for the future.

It should be noted that the fascist leadership hatched the idea of collusion with the Western powers in the interests of creating the most favorable conditions for waging war against the USSR in the initial period of World War II. This is evidenced by the flight of Hitler's closest assistant, R. Hess, to England in May 1941 with the aim of persuading its ruling circles to conclude a compromise peace with Nazi Germany.

After the failure of the "blitzkrieg" plan against the USSR, a search began for ways to make peace with the United States and England in order to save the fascist Reich. In 1942-1943. Himmler and Ribbentrop, through various persons, repeatedly established contact through various channels with Western representatives, including the head of American intelligence in Europe, A. Dulles. However, all their attempts to bring discord into the anti-Hitler coalition did not give practical results at that time. It was quite obvious that Germany, headed by a fascist government, posed a real threat to the security of the United States and England. Therefore, the political leaders of these countries could not enter into an open collusion with the Nazi executioners of the peoples to the detriment of the Soviet Union, which bore on its shoulders almost the entire burden of the struggle against the

aggressor. By the summer of 1944, when the Western Allies opened a second front, the Nazis finally realized that they had already lost the war. Field Marshals Rundstedt and Rommel, who commanded the German troops in the West, on June 29 advised Hitler to "draw political conclusions" from the martial law and, after making peace with the United States and England, throw all his forces into "holding the defense

in the East." Hitler, however, believed that there were not yet the necessary prerequisites for the success of negotiations with the Americans and the

still hoped to intimidate the United States and England with the might of Germany and, on this basis, enter into negotiations with them. The fascist command had high hopes for the use of the newly created new weapons - the V-1 jet unmanned projectiles and V-2 missiles. First of all, with the use of these weapons, Hitler sought to achieve the same goal that he failed to achieve in the autumn of 1940: to induce England to conclude peace by terrifying air strikes. The shelling of British cities began on the night

of June 13, 1944. In August 1944, the issue of bombing New York was discussed at Hitler's Headquarters. However, this intention proved impossible due to the lack of ultra-long-range bombers. Hopes for a "miracle weapon" did not materialize either. The V-1, which had a limited speed (650 km / h), was successfully fought by the British air defense. V-2s were practically invulnerable, but few were produced.

However, Hitler continued to believe in the possibility of concluding a separate peace with the Western allies. "I do not need to prove that I will not miss such an opportunity," he said. - But it is naive to hope for a favorable political moment in the period of heavy defeats. Such moments may arise in case of success. There will come a time when tensions between the allies will intensify so much that there will be a break. Even under the existing circumstances, we must wait a little longer." The fascist dictator saw a way out in using the anti-Soviet tendencies in the policy of the Western powers in the interests of fascism. He believed that at the last moment they would not allow the USSR to crush the stronghold of anti-communism in Europe. The reason for such a hope to Hitler could be given by

the increasing news of the growth of anti-Soviet sentiments among the British ruling circles, in particular, the message of the German ambassador to Turkey, F. Papen, that the British consul in G. threat" declared: "By the end of the war, England and America will be strong enough to order the Russians to stop where they see fit" (20).

Thus, the Hitlerite clique considered the achievement of an "honorable peace for Germany" as its main political goal during this period. In order to achieve it, the military-political leadership of the Reich in the second half of 1944 took a course of dragging out the war. At the same time, the main stake was placed on the contradictions between the imperialist countries, on the one hand, and the USSR, on the other. In order to persuade the Western allies to negotiate, the Nazis tried in every possible way to improve the strategic position of Germany, and above all the stabilization of the Eastern Front.

However, the fascist German troops failed to stabilize the defenses on the Soviet-German front. The passivity of the troops of the Western Allies near the western borders of Germany in the autumn of 1944, their lack of desire to take advantage of the favorable situation created by the constraint of the main forces of the Wehrmacht on the Soviet-German front, to conduct major strategic operations, the contradictions in the anti-Hitler coalition that increased by the end of the war - all this gave reason to the Hitlerite clique for illusions about the possibility of inducing the United States and England to a separate peace by a show of force.

Assessing the situation in France, Hitler admitted that the German troops available there, neither in terms of weapons nor equipment, were generally unsuitable for waging "maneuver warfare." Based on this, he concluded that the retention of French territory in the current situation had "no prospects." To stop the expeditionary forces, in his opinion, it would be possible after the withdrawal of all mobile formations to the positions of the Siegfried and Vosges lines. The fascist leadership hoped that they would be able to gain a foothold in these positions, buy time and go on the offensive against the Anglo-American troops. An important prerequisite for the success of the offensive, according to Hitler, would be the strengthening of German aviation on the Western Front.

In August 1944, Hitler's Headquarters made the final decision to strike in the West. The Supreme High Command of the German Armed Forces, according to K. Tippelskirch, believed that a powerful blow by the Wehrmacht against the Anglo-American troops would not only lead to a split between the USA and England, on the one hand, and the USSR, on the other, but also exacerbate

"political differences between Roosevelt and Churchill, and in the future will significantly strengthen the defense in the East, after which the most serious psychological consequences would not be slow to affect their own country, as well as throughout the world." Shortly before the start of the Ardennes operation, on December 12, 1944, A. Hitler told his generals: "The following should be kept in mind. In the history of the world there has not been a coalition of such heterogeneous elements pursuing different goals as our opponents have created. These are the sharpest contrasts imaginable on the globe: ultra-capitalist states, on the one hand, and ultra-Marxist states, on the other. These are states whose aims are already diverging more and more from day to day. And those who follow this process can see how these contradictions are becoming more and more intensified. If here (on the Western Front) a few more strong blows follow, then at any moment it may happen that this artificially supported front will collapse under thunderous peals. Colonel-General Jodl, chief of staff of the operational leadership of the Wehrmacht High Command, also believed that if the offensive was successful, "the plans of the allies would be upset for a long time and the enemy would have to make a fundamental revision of his policy."

Hoping to seize the initiative in the fight against the American and British troops and the possibility of the US and England withdrawing from the war, the Nazis saw the ultimate goal of the planned offensive operation in achieving a turning point in the course of the struggle in the West and creating favorable conditions for continuing the war against the USSR. The fascist leadership hoped that in the conditions of waging war on only one front, Germany would be able to succeed, to change the situation on the main, Soviet-German, front. The

offensive in the Ardennes (Operation "Watch on the Rhine"), therefore, was considered by the Headquarters of A. Hitler in the autumn of 1944 as a paramount task. The directive of the Supreme High Command of the Wehrmacht, signed by Hitler on November 10, 1944 in the casemates of the East Prussian Headquarters "Wolf's Lair", stated: "The purpose of the operation is to destroy enemy forces north of the Antwerp-Brussels-Luxembourg line

achieve a turning point in the campaign in the West and, possibly, in the course of the entire war.

From the memoirs of the commander of the 5th tank army in the winter of 1945 General Hasso von Manteuffel:

"Hitler said that now is the moment to put everything at stake, "for Germany needs a respite." In his opinion, even partial success would delay the implementation of the Allied plans for eight to ten weeks and give Germany a welcome respite. The temporary stabilization of the Western Front will enable the High Command to transfer troops from the West to the most dangerous - central - sector of the Eastern Front. Hitler believed that a successful operation at the moment would not only boost the morale of the German people, but also influence public opinion in the allied countries. "I am determined," continued Hitler, "to carry out this operation without risk. Even if the attacks of the Allies in the Metz region and in the direction of the Ruhr lead to heavy losses of our territory and fortified positions, I still intend to carry out this offensive "(21).

The situation, however, changed dramatically already in the first month of 1945. Having suffered a defeat on the Western Front, Hitler's Headquarters shifted its main attention to the Soviet-German front, carrying out a set of organizational measures in equipping large defensive regroupings of troops. As a result, a powerful system of fortifications stretched from the Baltic Sea to the Danube, and in depth - from East Prussia to Berlin and from the Carpathians to Vienna. The basis of this defense was long-term, well-equipped in engineering terms, lines and field positions of operational significance, densely saturated with reinforced concrete fortifications. The strategic grouping of enemy troops on the Soviet-German front was characterized by the fact that the main forces were concentrated on the shortest directions to Berlin - between the Baltic Sea and the Carpathians. But even on the southern wing, the enemy had a fairly strong grouping, numbering up to 70 divisions.

The Wehrmacht in the winter of 1945 was actively preparing to repel the next offensive of the Soviet Armed Forces, having at its disposal significant forces and means to solve this problem. Laying down

more hope for a "separate" peace, the military-political leadership of Germany was aware of the cruelty of the battle on the Soviet-German front.

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Chapter 2

So the year 1945 was approaching. What was remarkable for the Soviet Union and the Soviet Armed Forces of the year 1944, which is going down in

history? The armed forces of the Soviet Union, having completed the expulsion of the Nazi invaders from the homeland in 1944, entered the territory of Norway, East Prussia, reached the Vistula and the Carpathians, launched battles in Western Hungary. By January 1945, the front of Soviet troops passed along the line of Tilsit (Sovetsk), Yurburg (Yurbarkas), Augustow, Warsaw, Demblin, Sandomierz, Jaslo, Esztergom, Lake Balaton, Osijek (75 km southeast of Pech) and further south. The allies of Nazi Germany in Europe - Finland, Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary - were withdrawn from the war on the side of Germany and declared war on her. This meant the complete isolation of Germany in Europe and the expansion of the front of the anti-fascist coalition, the leading and leading force of which was the Soviet Union.

Significant changes took place in the country's economy. There has been a certain shift in the development of the oil industry. In the second half of 1944, compared with the first oil production increased by 0.6 million tons. Azerbaijan ranked first in the production of liquid fuel (65%), followed by the regions of the North Caucasus (8.2%), the Urals) and the Volga region (4.8%). Thanks to the selfless labor of miners and oil workers, one of the most cardinal problems of wartime was successfully solved: the country received such an amount of fuel that basically ensured the normal functioning of the sectors of the economy that worked for the needs of the front. The further expansion of the production of military equipment, the

urgent needs of the national economy, the increased scale of economic recovery in the liberated regions urgently dictated the need for a steady increase in production

cast iron, steel and black rolled products. The main role in the supply of military plants with metal was still played by the Urals and Western Siberia, primarily by such giants of the Soviet ferrous metallurgy as the Magnitogorsk and Kuznetsk plants, which in 1944 reached the highest level of production for the entire previous period of the war. Thus, the metallurgists of the Kuznetsk Combine during the year produced more than 71.2 thousand tons of pig iron, 75.4

thousand tons of steel and 157.5 thousand tons of rolled products in excess of the plan. This was the result, first of all, of the skillful use of the equipment of the blast furnace, open-hearth and rolling shops. Significantly exceeded the state task and the staff of the Magnitogorsk Combine. Compared to 1943, Magnitogorsk residents produced 26% more iron and 23.1% more steel. Only due to the better use of the units, the open-hearth shops increased steel production by 470 thousand tons during the year. It is characteristic that the metal smelted was not only of high quality, but also the cheapest in the country. Outstanding success was also achieved by the staff of the Novo-Tagil Metallurgical Plant, which occupied one of the first places in the industry in terms of the efficiency of blast furnace operation. As in the previous year of the war, in the forefront of the country's metallurgists were such leaders in production as high-speed steelworkers A. Ya. Chalkov, M. M. Privalov and M. V. Burkatsky at the Kuznetsk Combine, P. N. Breveshkin and V. F. Shlyamnev at Magnitogorsk, V. M. Amosov at the Zlatoust plant, N. Kh. Bazetov at the Verkh-Isetsky plant, D. D. Sidorovsky at the Uralmash plant, and many others.

Successes in the development of metallurgy were largely predetermined by the heroic labor of the workers in the mining industry. In the mines of the Urals and Siberia, through the efforts of all labor collectives, the extraction of iron ore increased from month to month, the ranks of followers of the

country's noble drillers A. I. Semivolos, I. P. Yankin and S. I. Eremenko grew. The liberated regions played an increasingly important role in providing metallurgical plants with ore. In the fourth quarter of 1944 the country received almost one and a half times more than in the first. **Table 1.** Growth

in the production of the main types of industrial products in the USSR in 1944

**Coke (million tons) 11.5 3.2 0.3 121.2 Primary aluminum
(thousand tons) 02.7 40.3 42.4 105.2) 34.0 13.0 10.2 113.2**

The data in the table show that the leading branches of Soviet industry developed along an ascending line. Despite the colossal losses suffered during the war, the Soviet economy clearly demonstrated its advantages over the German economy. Agricultural workers made a worthy contribution to ensuring the victories of the Soviet troops at the front. Even in 1944, their work was still affected by the severe consequences of the previous years of the war, and especially by the shortage of workers, leading cadres, agricultural machinery, spare parts and fertilizers. However, thanks to the heroic labor of the collective farmers, workers of the MTS and state farms, the situation in this sector of the economy improved markedly. Relying on the successes of heavy

industry, the government took measures to strengthen the material and technical base of agriculture. In 1944, for this purpose, mainly for equipping MTS and state farms, the state allocated 7 billion rubles - one and a half times more than in the previous year. During the year, the People's Commissariat of Agriculture received a total of 1833 tractors, 2435 tractor plows, 1037 horse seeders. Fuel deliveries per tractor approached the pre-war level. However, the main role in increasing the mechanization of agricultural work was played by a sharp increase in the production of spare parts, which was actually stopped in the first years of the war. As a result, it was possible to restore broken tractors and thereby increase the volume of tractor work on collective farms in 1944 compared to 1943 by 25 million hectares (1).

Chief of the General Staff AI Antonov Measures were also taken to expand and improve the training of specialists for the countryside. The Council of People's Commissars of the USSR, by its decree of September 23, 1944, established a single type of secondary agricultural educational institutions with a three-year term of study. Their number was constantly growing. Thus, in the system of the People's Commissariat of Agriculture of the RSFSR in the 1944/45 academic year, there were 209 agricultural technical schools against 54 at the beginning of the 1941/42 academic year. Almost tripl

number of students (2). Tens of thousands of collective farm chairmen, foremen and team leaders were retrained at special courses. A characteristic feature of the development of agriculture in 1944 was a certain increase in the culture of agriculture. Measures were taken to restore crop rotations that had been disrupted in previous years of the war. A course was taken to restore autumn plowing, which in the first years of the war many collective farms had to abandon due to a lack of labor and equipment. On September 16, 1944, the People's Commissariat of Agriculture of the USSR, noting the lagging behind in a number of regions in the rise of fallow, demanded that the regional land administrations not postpone the fallow plowing for the post-harvest period. In order to ensure the strict implementation of the plan for the early rise of the plough, in addition to organizational measures, a system of material incentives for tractor drivers

and other workers of the MTS was provided. As a result of the heroic labor of the collective farm peasantry, 1944 became a turning point in the development of agriculture during the war. With the liberation of the territories occupied by the enemy, the total sown area reached 73% of the pre-war level.

The area under grain crops increased by 11.4 million hectares. The number of cattle reached 81% of the pre-war level (in 1943 - 62%). The gross volume of agricultural production in relation to the pre-war level amounted to 54%

(against 37% in 1943).

The state of production of the main types of agricultural products in 1943-1944. reflected in the table.

Table 2. Production of the main types of agricultural products in

The growth of agricultural production made it possible to improve the supply of food to the front and rear, and to industry - raw materials. The successes of agricultural workers achieved in 1944 became possible thanks to the help of the working class. The alliance of the working class with the peasantry, which was further strengthened during the Great Patriotic War, was one of the decisive sources of new victories for the Soviet people in the war against Germany.

The situation with the transportation of national economic goods was difficult. At the end of 1944, there were interruptions in the transportation of ferrous metals, grain, fuel, and especially coal, on some railways.

This forced some enterprises to start spending raw materials and fuel stored for work in winter conditions. Therefore, at the end of October, the railways received an increased task for the transportation of coal. To provide practical assistance to transport workers on the spot, in December, at the direction of the People's Commissar of Railways I.V. Kovalev, his deputies and other senior officials of the People's Commissariat went to the

Tomsk, Karaganda, Omsk, Sverdlovsk and South Ural railways. The essential role of transportation

V

military

And

national economic cargo played and other modes of transport: sea, river, road, Civil Air Fleet of the USSR. The rivermen, overcoming enormous difficulties, and primarily the shortage of ships, in 1944 fulfilled the military transportation plan by 107.7%. The sailors of the merchant fleet worked hard, who, in addition to transportation along internal lines, delivered various cargoes from abroad via ocean communications.

The work of road transport was still exceptionally tense. Despite great difficulties, he, as before, basically coped with his tasks. In 1944, due to the replenishment and better use of the fleet of vehicles, for the first time during the war, it was possible to seriously increase the turnover of road transport. The total volume of traffic of the USSR Civil Air Fleet increased more and more. In 1944, it doubled compared to the previous year. Freight turnover of all types of transport increased by

15.3% over the year and amounted to 343.8 billion ton-km. This basically covered the needs of the front and rear in the transportation of goods.

Achievements in the production of the main types of industrial products served as a solid basis for maintaining military production at a high level, providing the front with military equipment, weapons, ammunition and all kinds of provisions. Data on the production of the most important types of military products are given in the table. As follows from their analysis, special attention was paid to the supply of large-caliber guns, heavy and medium tanks, and combat aircraft to the fronts. **Table 3.** Production of the main types of military equipment,

weapons and

Combat weapons ammunition	For the year In the first In the second			
	And			
Rifles and carbines	2430.0	1238.0	1192.0	94.8
(thousands) Pistols - bullets	1970.8	1003.3	987.3	98.4
(thousands) Machine guns	400.1	220.3	90.3	202.8
(thousands) Mortars	71.9	37.7	34.6	34.6

91.9 Note . Data on the production of guns of all types, mortars and machine guns in the table are given according to the average quarterly output. The development of military production in 1944 was characterized by serious qualitative

changes. The tank industry began to produce only heavy and medium tanks (the production of light tanks completely stopped back in 1943). Moreover, in the second half of 1944, the front received significantly more heavy tanks than in the first. From July until the end of 1944, only one Kirov plant in Chelyabinsk produced 500 heavy tanks and self-propelled guns (4) per month. The new heavy tank IS-2 with a 122-mm cannon and the upgraded medium T-34 with an 85-mm cannon outperformed similar tanks of fascist Germany in terms of their tactical and technical data. They had better armor protection, maneuverability and cross-country ability, more powerful weapons, and a large power reserve. In 1944, the country's industry began mass production of heavy self-propelled guns ISU-122 and ISU-152. In the third quarter, the production of a new self-propelled artillery mount was launched, designed on the basis of the T-34 tank, but with a more powerful 100-mm gun. Until the end of the year, 50 ° SU-100 were produced.

The production of light self-propelled units continued. During the period under review, the People's Commissariat for Armaments provided the needs of the front for armaments for major offensive operations of the Soviet troops. With the reduction in the production of small-caliber artillery systems, the production of medium and large-caliber guns increased significantly. A great scientific, technical and industrial achievement was, in particular,

mass production of a new 100-mm field gun of the 1944 model and a 100-mm gun for self-propelled guns. These guns, as well as the 57-mm ZIS-2 anti-tank gun, the 76.2-mm ZIS-3 gun, the 152-mm howitzer

and the 152-mm howitzer-gun, were distinguished by high performance characteristics and

were better than similar

German guns. The production of small arms, which in the second half of 1944 the Soviet Armed Forces were adequately equipped with, was somewhat reduced. The enterprises of the People's Commissariat of Mortar Weapons, with a slight reduction in medium-caliber mortars, expanded the production of heavy 160-mm mortars. By the end of the year, about 600 of them were manufactured. With an increase in the calibers of shells and mines, the production of ammunition somewhat decreased. Despite this, the People's Commissariat of Ammunition provided the troops with ammunition for all types of weapons.

The aviation industry continued to increase the production of aircraft. In 1944, their production increased by 5.3 thousand compared to 1943. Serial production of new types of aircraft was launched: the Yak-3 fighter (designer A.S. Yakovlev) and La-7 (designer S.A. Lavochkin), Il-10 attack aircraft (designer S. V. Ilyushin), Tu-2 bomber (designer A. N. Tupolev). These aircraft, in terms of their combat qualities, favorably differed from German aircraft of similar types.

Thanks to the heroic labor of workers, engineers and scientists, the weapons and military equipment of the Red Army, in terms of tactical and technical indicators, still surpassed the weapons and military equipment of the German army. Lend-lease supplies played a certain role in providing the Red Army with military equipment and vehicles: in 1944, the USSR received 5877 aircraft, 3332 tanks, 3122 guns (5). The most important feature of the military-political situation in the

second half of 1944 was the almost complete liberation of the occupied regions of the USSR and the expulsion by Soviet troops of invaders from a number of countries in Central and South-Eastern Europe. However, Germany was still a serious force. And this required enormous efforts from the Soviet Union and other countries of the anti-Hitler coalition in order to complete the cause of its defeat.

In addition, there was a stubborn and lengthy struggle in the Far East.

against militaristic Japan. The opening of the second front testified that the principles of the coalition strategy of the USSR, the USA and Great Britain, developed in Tehran, were finally being put into practice. The USSR, the USA and Great Britain have significantly increased the coordination of their foreign policy actions related to the conduct of the war and the development of organizational problems. The experience of international relations that had developed by that time quite convincingly showed that the coalition of the USSR, the USA and Great Britain was based not on random and transient motives, but on vital interests. Therefore, and also in connection with the persistent attempts of Germany and Japan to split the anti-Hitler coalition, the Soviet Union continued to attach paramount importance to strengthening the cooperation of the states participating in the war against Germany. By the end of 1944, there was a need for a new meeting of the leaders of the three great powers. Earlier, on September 11-16, F. Roosevelt and W. Churchill met in Quebec, and on October 9-18, JV Stalin met with W.

Churchill in Moscow. Although the governments of the USSR, the USA and Great Britain informed each other about the results of bilateral meetings, this was not enough to solve the new urgent problems facing the anti-Hitler coalition. One of the positive results of Soviet-American-British cooperation was the holding of a conference in Dumbarton Oaks from August 21 to September 28. The conference discussed the creation of an international security organization. In striving to strengthen the anti-fascist coalition, the government of the USSR strove to develop friendly relations with each allied country. This was understood and supported by many leaders of the states of the anti-Hitler coalition. F. Roosevelt, President of the United States of America, continued to attach great importance to the strengthening of Soviet-American relations. It is no coincidence that I. V. Stalin wrote to the British Prime Minister regarding the election of F.

Roosevelt as head of state for the fourth time: "In

In the Soviet Union this will be greeted as our new common victory" (6).

Relations with France occupied a significant place in the foreign policy activity of the Soviet government during the period under review. The consistent line of the USSR to strengthen Soviet-French cooperation had important consequences both for France and for the consolidation of all the forces that fought against the aggressors, the Soviet Union in every possible way contributed to its desire to take its rightful place among the great powers (7). He had a certain influence on the United States and Great Britain when they resolved the issue of recognizing the Provisional French Government headed by General de Gaulle. The Soviet government, regarding the recognition on October 23, 1944 by the United States of America, Great Britain and the Soviet Union of the Provisional Government of France, stated that this act "will further unite the French people and mobilize their forces for further struggle against the common enemy - Nazi Germany" (8). The Soviet Union supported the participation of France in the work of the

European Consultative Commission as the fourth permanent member of this commission. On August 12, 1944, the Soviet government submitted a proposal to include France in the permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council. Important for the further strengthening of Soviet-French relations was the visit to Moscow of the head of the Provisional Government of France, General de Gaulle, in early December 1944. He was accompanied by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Chief of Staff of the National Defense and other figures of the French Republic. At the talks, which lasted more than a week, the leaders of the USSR and France discussed relations between the two countries, as well as the most important problems of the military-political situation in Europe. At the same time, the Soviet leaders proceeded from the need to further strengthen the unity of the anti-fascist coalition as a whole. The main result of the Soviet-French negotiations was the signing on December

10, 1944 of the Treaty of Alliance and Mutual Assistance between the USSR and the French Republic. It provided

joint military efforts and mutual assistance in the fight against Nazi Germany. The USSR and France pledged, after the end of the war, "to jointly take all necessary measures to eliminate any new threat emanating from Germany, and to prevent such actions that would make possible any new attempt at aggression on her part" (9). During the period under

review, the Soviet Union paid great attention to the problems of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, the Mongolian People's Republic, which emerged from the war on the side of Germany, Romania, Finland, Bulgaria, as well as Japan and China.

The main issue for the Soviet military-political leadership, of course, remained the question of organizing armed struggle on the Soviet-German front. Recall that by the beginning

of 1945 the front line passed through the territory of Latvia, Lithuania, East Prussia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Yugoslavia - from the Baltic Sea to the Drava River along the line of Tukums, Liepaja, Klaipeda (Memel), the Neman River to Jurbarkas, Warsaw, Jaslo, Kosice, Esztergom, Lake Balaton, the Drava River near Toryaitsa (total length 2200 km instead of 4400 km in 1944). As part of the Soviet Armed Forces, 10 front-line formations, 2 fleets and 3 flotillas, 51 combined arms, 6 tank, 10 air armies and 2 air defense fronts of the country operated at the front. The Soviet troops had 473 rifle, airborne and cavalry divisions, as well as 21 tank, 12 mechanized corps (including 9 tank and 6 mechanized corps in tank armies) and a large number of other formations and units. In the reserve of the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command were the directorates of two fronts, four combined arms (19th, 26th, 32nd and 9th guards) and two air (14th and 7th) armies, four tank and mechanized corps, twenty rifle divisions, others connections and parts. They numbered 501.1 thousand people, 6883 guns and mortars, 520 tanks and self-propelled guns, 464 combat aircraft (10). Together with the Soviet troops, the Polish, two Romanian, Bulgarian armies, the

Czechoslovak army corps and their aviation units, the French aviation regiment "Normandie

- Neman" fought. By January 1st

In 1945, they numbered 347.1 thousand soldiers and officers, 3979 guns and mortars, 181 tanks and self-propelled

guns, 427 combat aircraft. Thus, on the Soviet-German front (without the reserve of the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command), the Red Army had 6.7 million people (72% of the total), 107.3 thousand guns and mortars (74%), 12.1 thousand tanks and self-propelled - artillery installations (77%), 14.7 thousand combat aircraft (65%). She firmly held the initiative and was preparing for new offensive operations. The Soviet troops had an overall superiority of 1.8 times in personnel, 1.9 in guns and mortars, 1.5 in tanks and self-propelled artillery (assault) guns, and 3.6 in combat aircraft.

In the operating fleets (Northern and Red Banner Baltic) there were 2 battleships, 3 cruisers, 31 leaders and destroyers, 40 submarines and

1438 combat aircraft. A

well-organized system of fortifications in terms of engineering and firepower stretched from the Baltic Sea to the Danube, and in depth - from East Prussia to Berlin and from the Carpathians and the Danube to Vienna. It filled with itself the entire space along which the Red Army was to advance. The basis of this defense was long-term lines and field positions of operational significance, densely saturated with reinforced concrete fortifications. On the whole, this enemy defense system, in terms of the nature of the fortifications, the depth of separation, and also the density of the defending troops, was especially powerful, which was taken into account by the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command and the

General Staff. Planning for the final stage of the armed struggle on the Soviet-German front began as early as during the summer-autumn campaign of 1944. This is evidenced by the documents of the General Staff, the memoirs of the Deputy Supreme Commander-in-Chief Marshal of the Soviet Union G.K. Zhukov, Chief of the General Staff Marshal of the Soviet Union A.M. Vasilevsky, Chief of the Operational Directorate of the General Staff, General S. M. Shtemenko, other military leaders and statesmen. The headquarters of

the Supreme High

Command was aware that four main strategic directions loomed before the Red Army:

East Prussian, then passing into Pomeranian, Warsaw-Berlin, Silesian and Danubian. It was also planned that in order to solve problems in the shortest possible time, the offensive should be carried out simultaneously in all four directions according to a single strategic plan.

The results of the offensive in the summer and autumn of 1944 on all directions without exception were more than encouraging. The Red Army defeated 219 enemy divisions and 22 brigades. The enemy lost a total of 1,600,000 men, 6,700 tanks, 28,000 guns and mortars, and 12,000 aircraft. Fascist Germany could no longer make up for these losses. Great was the moral damage suffered by the enemy. By the end of October 1944, Soviet troops were on the border with Finland and were successfully advancing in Northern Norway. They cleared the territory of the Baltic states, except for the Syrve peninsula and Courland, invaded East Prussia up to the line of Goldap, Augustow. To the south of East Prussia, the Narew and Vistula were crossed in many areas, important bridgeheads were captured in the areas of Rozhay, Serock, Magnuszew, Pulaw, Sandomierz; ahead stretched the Berlin strategic direction. The 2nd Ukrainian Front went to Budapest. On October 20, the 3rd Ukrainian Front liberated the capital of Yugoslavia, Belgrade.

However, the victories, as Marshal A. M. Vasilevsky noted, were not easy. Divisions thinned out. The pace of their progress has slowed down noticeably. By weakening some of his defenses in Western Europe, Hitler managed to maneuver part of his forces to the east and create a solid and solid front here, the breakthrough of which required serious preparation. The General Staff was well aware of the complexity of the further development of success. The conditions and prospects for an offensive were not the same

everywhere. The plan of the Soviet command for the winter of 1944/45. The enemy's defense in Courland was exceptionally strong. Breaking through it and destroying the three dozen divisions dug in there could cost the advancing extremely dearly. The situation in East Prussia seemed more favorable. The 3rd Belorussian Front possessed, in comparison with the enemy opposing it, some superiority in strength. Based on this, the General Staff considered it possible, with some

additional reinforcement of troops at the expense of the reserves of the Supreme High Command, deliver a powerful blow across the whole of East Prussia to the mouth

of the Vistula to a depth of 220-250 km. In the future, however, unfortunately, we had to confine ourselves here, at least for the first time, to more modest goals. As for the Warsaw-Poznań, as well as the Silesian directions, where, in essence, the fate of Berlin was decided, especially strong resistance was expected there. It was believed that the 1st Belorussian and 1st Ukrainian fronts, with the maximum exertion of forces, could carry out offensive operations to a depth of no more than 140-150 km.

But in the bands of the 4th, 2nd and 3rd Ukrainian fronts, proceeding primarily from political considerations, the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command counted on much greater success. The prospect of a rapid advance to the line of Moravska Ostrava, Brno, on the outskirts of Vienna was drawn. The capture of Budapest in a short time and the crossing of the Danube seemed quite realistic. A significant part of the enemy infantry here was made up of Hungarian divisions, whose combat effectiveness, according to the then assumptions, could be undermined at the root by anti-war sentiments that were growing among the population, and by the atrocities of the Nazis, who sought to keep Hungary in the wake of the Third Reich at any cost. Unfortunately, these predictions did not come true. The fascist dictatorship, supported by the Germans, succeeded for some time in chaining Hungary to the German war chariot. As a result, extremely heavy and bloody battles ensued in the Budapest direction from the end of October. An enemy group of 39 formations operated against the 2nd Ukrainian Front. Its core consisted of seven tank divisions (five German and two Hungarian). The enemy relied on an extensive system of well-prepared fortifications and put up fierce resistance. The fight for the capital of Hungary dragged on for three and a half month.

The very limited results achieved by the Red Army in October testified to the need to rest the divisions that had not had a shift for a long time, to regroup, tighten up the rear, create material reserves necessary for a breakthrough and the subsequent development of operations. Finally, it was necessary, on the basis of the assessment

the current situation, choose the most advantageous directions and develop plans for the speedy and final defeat of the Wehrmacht. All this took time. At the beginning of

November 1944, the Supreme Command Headquarters comprehensively reviewed the state of affairs in the zones of operations of the 2nd Belorussian, 1st Belorussian and 1st Ukrainian fronts. In front of them was the main strategic grouping of the enemy - army groups ^ Center "and" A "almost in full strength. These fronts did not possess the superiority in forces and means necessary for an offensive. The conclusion was that they were going on the defensive. At the next report to the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, the Deputy Chief of the General Staff, General A. I. Antonov, especially insisted on this and asked permission to prepare the relevant directives. The General Staff received such permission. On the night of November 5, 1944, the directive to go over to the defensive was given to the 3rd and 2nd Belorussian fronts. A few days later, a similar order was issued to the troops of the right wing of the 1st Belorussian Front. General S. M. Shtemenko recalls: "From

the very beginning, the last campaign of the war with Germany was supposed to be carried out in two stages. At the first stage, active operations were to continue primarily in the old, so to speak, direction - the southern flank of the Soviet German front in the Budapest area. They expected to create a turning point here by withdrawing the main forces of the 3rd Ukrainian Front to the area south of Kecskemét between the Tisza and Danube rivers. From there they could assist the 2nd Ukrainian Front with strikes to the northwest and west. We hoped that the troops of these two fronts, in close cooperation, would be able to advance at a high pace and in 20-25 days they would reach the line of Banska, Bistrica, Komarno, Nagykanizsa, and a month later, at the end of December, they would reach the approaches to Vienna. We had no doubt

that the inevitable threat of defeating the southern flank would force the German command to transfer additional forces here from the Berlin direction, and this, in turn, would create favorable conditions for the advance of our main forces - those fronts that

located north of the Carpathians. The General Staff firmly believed that by the beginning of 1945 the Soviet Army in the lower reaches of the Vistula would reach Bromberg, take Poznan, take control of the Breslavl, Pardubice, Jihlava and Vienna lines, that is, advance from the line of its October location by 120-350 km. After that, the second stage of the campaign began, as a result of which Germany was supposed to capitulate.

Thus, in the initial estimate of the plan, referring to the end of October 1944, only the general content of the final campaign of the war was outlined, dividing it into two stages. The direction of the main blow has not yet been determined. The idea of cutting the strategic front of the enemy and dismembering his groupings

not yet

was expressed¹² (12).

In the interests of a more precise development of the plan, the General Staff at the beginning of November summed up what had already been achieved and succinctly formulated an assessment of the strategic position of the parties. It was considered established that the Red Army had won victories that would decide the outcome of the war. The end of the struggle on the Soviet-German front was predetermined in our favor, the hour of the final defeat of the enemy approached. The fighting was fully supported by the well-coordinated work of the rear. He provided the front with ever-increasing assistance. The strategic position of the Soviet troops and the armies of other countries of the anti-Hitler coalition was assessed by the Supreme Command Headquarters as close to the completion of the encirclement of Germany. "Our strikes," emphasized G.K. Zhukov, "coordinated well with the actions of the allies in Western Europe" (13). In essence, the Red Army and the Anglo-American forces took up starting positions for a decisive offensive against the vital centers of Germany. Now it was necessary to make the last swift onslaught and in a short

time to finally crush the enemy. As

subsequent events confirmed, this assessment, which formed the basis for the detailed development of the operational side of the concept of the final campaign in Europe, was

fundamentally correct. Previously, the

idea was very carefully discussed with A. I. Antonov. In addition to Alexei Innokentyevich himself, the following took part in this: the head of the Operations Department, his deputies

Generals A. A. Gryzlov and N. A. Lomov, heads of the respective areas. All the considerations expressed here were later clarified in the Operational Directorate. In the same place, forces and means were calculated and all other elements of the operation were worked out. Finally, the idea received a graphic design: with all the calculations and justifications, it was plotted on a map, after which it was once again subjected to, one might say, captious discussion. As in the past, the initial operations were planned in the most detailed way. The further tasks of the fronts were outlined only in general

terms. In the course of creative searches, the general idea of the active Soviet Armed Forces was first born, and then finally crystallized. It was recognized that the central section of the Soviet-German front was decisive, because a strike from here would withdraw troops along the shortest path to the vital centers of Germany. But it was here that the densest grouping

of enemy troops was located. In order to create more favorable conditions for our offensive, it was recognized as expedient, as it were, to stretch the central grouping of fascist troops. To do this, it was necessary to become as active as possible on the flanks of the strategic front. It was no longer only about Hungary and Austria, but also about East Prussia. An energetic offensive near Budapest and Vienna had to be combined with an offensive against Koenigsberg.

The General Staff was well aware that in East Prussia and Hungary the enemy was showing heightened sensitivity. With strong pressure, he will certainly begin to move here his reserves and troops from the unattacked sectors of the front. As a result, the western direction, where decisive events were planned, will seriously weaken.

Our expectations were justified. As a result of the offensive actions of the Soviet troops in November - December 1944, the enemy concentrated 26 divisions in East Prussia (of which seven

armored) and in close proximity to the capital of Hungary 55 divisions (including nine armored). As it became known later, Hitler then believed that in 1945 the Red Army would deliver the main blow not in the Berlin direction, but through Hungary and the Czech Republic. (14) Therefore, the main forces of the Wehrmacht were sent there. The German high command and this time was forced to obey the will of

the Soviet command and on the main sector of the front left 49 divisions, including only five tank divisions. The fact

that the enemy's strategic front took on such a peculiar form, with its strongest groupings on the flanks and a relatively weak center, forced the Soviet command to think about the most expedient methods of action in the main direction. The General Staff came to the conclusion that the most effective way to solve the problem could be to break through a relatively weak center, after which a direct blow, dismember the front of the Wehrmacht and develop an offensive against Berlin.

"It was not difficult to clarify the probable tasks and the most expedient methods of action for each of the fronts," noted S. M. Shtemenko. - First of all, I had to break my head in relation to the 3rd Belorussian Front. The enemy grouping in East Prussia was very strong and relied on powerful long-term fortifications, natural barriers, and settlements adapted for defense. From here, the enemy could hit the flank of the troops in the Berlin direction. Consequently, the East Prussian grouping had to not only be tied up in battles, but also isolated from the rest of the strategic front, split up if possible, and not allowed to act in a concentrated manner "(15). Such a versatile operational task - to bind, isolate, split up - required the

use of at least two fronts for the offensive in East Prussia: one - to strike at Koenigsberg from the east and the other - to isolate the East Prussian grouping from Army Group A in the Berlin direction, and also from the strategic rear. A deep bypass of East Prussia from the south and southwest simultaneously covered the flank of the Soviet troops aimed at Warsaw, Poznan, Berlin. The attack on the East Prussian grouping from the east was most handy for the 3rd Belorussian Front, and the 2nd Belorussian Front had to bypass it. To solve the main task - creating a gap in the enemy's strategic front and a rapid offensive to the west - the 1st Belorussian and 1st Ukrainian

fronts. They were to be saturated in every possible way with tanks, primarily in the form of tank armies and

separate tank corps. In the last

three days of October and at the beginning of November 1944, the directions of the attacks of each of the fronts, the zone of their offensive, the depth of the immediate and subsequent tasks were precisely determined. At the same time, the minimum period necessary for the final defeat of the Nazi war machine was approximately calculated. It was assumed that this could be achieved within 45 days of offensive operations to a depth of 600-700 km in two successive efforts (stages) without operational pauses between them. 15 days were allotted for the first stage, and 30 for the second. The planned pace of the offensive was not high, since fierce enemy resistance was expected in the final battles.

When specifying the depth of tasks, the entire set of specific conditions, in particular, the features of the terrain, were taken into account. Thus, for the 3rd Belorussian Front, where the combat area was very difficult, and the enemy is strong, the depth of the immediate task was determined at 50-60 km. In the zone of the 2nd Belorussian Front, the possibilities made it possible to plan the next task to the line of Mlava, Drobin, that is, 60-80 km. The depth of the immediate tasks for the 1st Belorussian, 1st and partly 4th Ukrainian fronts could reach 120-160 km. The subsequent tasks of the 1st Belorussian and 1st Ukrainian fronts, operating in the flat conditions of Western Poland, were calculated to a depth of 130-180 km. Directions of strikes were confidently determined. The 2nd Belorussian

Front

delivered two blows: on Marienburg - cutting off the East Prussian grouping from other enemy

troops, and on Allenstein - dissecting it. The 1st Belorussian part of the forces was supposed to move around Warsaw, while part of it rushed towards the troops of the 1st Ukrainian Front, who were smashing the Kielce-Radom group of Germans. Adjacent strike forces of the 1st and 4th Ukrainian fronts were advancing on Krakow. Two southern fronts - the 2nd and 3rd Ukrainian - the ultimate goal of offensive operations in the first stage of the campaign still had

Vienna. It should be noted that, while developing the concept of the 1945 campaign, the Headquarters of the Supreme Command gathered the commanders for a special meeting, as was the case in the past (for example, when developing the plan of operation ^ (Bagration). This time, the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command limited itself to calling the commanders separately to the General Staff. With each of them, all the details of the operations of the front were discussed, and then the already agreed considerations

were reported to the Headquarters. Until November 7 and on holidays, the Marshals of the Soviet Union F. I. Tolbukhin, K. K. Rokossovsky, I. S. Konev worked in the General Staff and Army General I. D. Chernyakhovsky. After the holiday, a comprehensive discussion of the plan of the campaign as a whole took place at the Headquarters of the Supreme Command. No significant amendments were made to it. It was agreed that the offensive would begin on the main axis on January 20, 1945, but the plans of operations have not yet been approved and directives to the fronts were given.

A few days later, the Supreme Commander-in-Chief determined that the troops that would take the capital of Germany, Berlin, would be led, as the most experienced, by his deputy Marshal of the Soviet Union G.K. Zhukov. On November 16, 1944, Georgy Konstantinovich was appointed to the post of commander of the 1st Belorussian Front. Marshal of the Soviet Union K.K. Rokossovsky moved from here to the 2nd Belorussian Front and replaced G.F. Zakharov there.

Stalin personally informed them of this by telephone.

The Supreme Commander-in-Chief took upon himself the coordination of the actions of all four fronts in the Berlin direction. As a result, there was no need to work on the 3rd Belorussian Front of A. M. Vasilevsky. Behind him, as a representative of the Headquarters, was left the leadership of the operations of only the 1st and 2nd Baltic fronts. But on February 20, 1945, after the death of Army General I. D. Chernyakhovsky, Alexander Mikhailovich was again returned to the 3rd Belorussian Front. Now as a commander. And A. I. Antonov took the post of Chief of the General Staff.

So, 1945, from its very beginning, was supposed to be marked by simultaneous strikes from several fronts in the Berlin strategic direction. These blows were intended to break through and

dismember the enemy front into parts, disrupt his communications and communications, disrupt the interaction of the enemy groupings located here and destroy their main forces already at the first stage of the campaign. This created favorable conditions for the

end of the war. Most attention

was paid to the 1st Belorussian Front. His troops were to advance from the Magnushevsky and Pulawy bridgeheads. The breakthrough had to be swift. Meanwhile, the very presence of bridgeheads to some extent revealed to the enemy the direction of attacks, and he, of course, took appropriate countermeasures. In some connection with this, the neighboring 1st

Ukrainian

Front on the left had to develop an offensive not along the shortest path to the German border, but somewhat to the north, to Kalisz. The General Staff believed that the shortest route for the 1st Ukrainian Front would not have been justified for a number of other reasons. Indeed, in Poland, on this path lay the Upper Silesian industrial region with its massive stone buildings adapted for defense. And then stretched German Silesia, where the conditions for defense were no worse. In the future, protracted battles were drawn, the loss of the pace of the operation and numerous unjustified casualties. Therefore, after repeated discussions of this issue with Marshal I. S. Konev, the General Staff, and then the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command, settled on the option of an offensive bypassing Silesia from the northeast and north. Such a blow created an inevitable

threat to the rear of the enemy, located in front of the 1st Belorussian Front, which greatly facilitated the advance of troops to Poznan. In addition, in this case, all the industrial facilities of Silesia could remain unscathed. I. V. Stalin paid special attention to the safety of the Silesian industrial region and specifically spoke on this issue with the commander of the 1st Ukrainian Front, I. S. Konev. On November 27, G.K. Zhukov arrived in Moscow on a call from

the Headquarters. Based

on front-line reconnaissance data, he believed that a strike by the 1st Belorussian Front directly to the west was very difficult due to the presence of numerous enemy defensive lines there,

occupied by troops. According to Zhukov, most likely success could be achieved with the actions of the main forces of the front on Lodz, followed by access to Poznan. The Supreme Commander-in-Chief agreed with this clarification. The operational side of the decision on the initial operation of the 1st Belorussian Front was somewhat changed.

This also changed things for the neighbor on the left: the exit of the 1st Ukrainian Front to Kalisz was losing its significance. Marshal Konev was indicated as the main direction to Breslau.

It goes without saying that while plans were being refined, preparations for the operation went on as usual. reserves were concentrated. The fronts were replenished with everything necessary. By the end of November, the picture of the upcoming offensive was completely determined, although the plans for operations were approved by the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command only at the end of December. Subsequently, only partial changes were made to them. The most significant of these particulars - the change in the date of commencement of operations - was due to the critical situation of the allies in the Ardennes. In mid-December, the Germans took very energetic actions there, and the head of the British government, W. Churchill, was forced to appeal to JV Stalin for help. True to their allied obligations, the Soviet troops went on the offensive on January 12 - 8 days ahead of schedule. His pace exceeded all our expectations. In the central direction, the troops of the 1st Belorussian and 1st Ukrainian fronts had already reached the Poznan-Breslau line by January 24. The main forces of the German Army Group Center, which was defending in Poland, suffered a heavy defeat. Remains of them

moved to the west and northwest. An

analysis of the situation that had developed by the end of January 1945 confirmed the conclusion made earlier by the Supreme Command Headquarters about the need for a non-stop offensive, up to the capture of Berlin. However, at that time it was still impossible to put an equal sign between the fall of Berlin and the complete surrender of Germany. The enemy still retained fairly strong groupings of troops in Western Europe, as well as in Hungary. Only in the area of Budapest, he had eleven panzer divisions and other troops that were able to hold out for some time. The General Staff has

also data on Hitler's intention to continue the fight in the so-called Alpine fortress. Allies knew about it too. W. Churchill even asked Stalin about Soviet plans in case Hitler "moved to the south" (16). But in any case, of course, the capture of Berlin finally undermined the foundations of the Third Reich. In order to avoid serious miscalculations, the Headquarters of the Supreme High

Command and the General Staff, as usual before, did not begin to make a final decision on the second stage of the campaign without first consulting with the front commanders. When Soviet troops reached the Poznan-Breslau line, Moscow requested the opinion of the commanders of the 1st Belorussian and 1st Ukrainian fronts regarding the nature of their further actions. On January 26, 1945, the General Staff received the decision of the commander of the 1st Belorussian Front on an essentially non-stop offensive until the capture of the German capital. It was supposed to bring up troops in four days, especially artillery, gather rear areas, replenish combat supplies, put in order the material part of tank formations, introduce the 3rd shock army and the 1st army of the Polish Army into the first echelon in order to

On February 1-2, continue the offensive with all the forces of the front. The immediate task is to force the Oder on the move. The next one is a blow to Berlin. At the same time, the 2nd Guards

Tank Army was supposed to cover it from the north-west, and the 1st - from northeast. A day

later, the decision of the commander of the 1st Ukrainian Front was received. He, too, intended to act without noticeable pause. The offensive was planned to continue on February 5-6 and reach the Elbe by February 25-28, and the right wing, in cooperation with the 1st Belorussian

Front, to capture Berlin. The same point of

view was held by the Supreme Commander-in-Chief. On February 4, 1945, at the famous Yalta Conference, as Winston Churchill recalls, he gave a very optimistic assessment of the situation, noting that the enemy's front had been broken through and the Germans were only filling up the holes. Therefore, the opinions of all agreed on one thing - it is necessary to continue the unceasing offensive and take control of Berlin. Fronts got to this score

the necessary instructions from Moscow and, in turn, set tasks for the armies. However, soon it was necessary to make significant adjustments to the planned plan, however, not in terms of content and goals, but in terms of the timing and sequence of their achievement. As before, the Soviet fronts themselves had to destroy enemy groups in East Prussia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary, occupy Berlin, liberate Prague and end the war victoriously. An important place in the solution of the tasks noted was assigned to the operations of the Red Army to encircle and defeat the enemy.

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Chapter 3 Defeat in Hungary

The last military autumn of 1944 arrived. The Red Army successfully advanced on the entire Soviet-German front. On September 23, 1944, the forward units of the left wing of the 2nd Ukrainian Front (commander - Colonel General R. Ya. Malinovsky) entered the territory of Hungary near the city of Battonya (95 km east of the Tisza River near the city of Szeged). They tried to develop an offensive inland, but, faced with the most stubborn opposition from the enemy, they advanced slowly. By the end of the month, Soviet troops managed to expand the gap to 80 km, advance from 5 to 20 km, and capture the cities of Elek and Mako. But they didn't have more

forces.

Hungary, one of Germany's allies in World War II, was a kingdom without a king until

December 1944. The state was ruled by a temporary ruler, former Rear Admiral M. Horthy, who was proclaimed regent in 1920. In 1939, Hungary joined the Anti-Comintern Pact, and then the Berlin Pact of 1940, participated in the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia, in the attack on Yugoslavia and the USSR. For loyalty to the Third Reich, Hungary received part of Slovakia, Transcarpathian Ukraine, Northern Transylvania and part of Yugoslavia (1). With the approach of the Red Army to the territory of Romania, the rulers of Hungary began to pursue a policy of balancing, calculated on the

support of the United States and England in the event that Germany lost the war. But, as noted above, on March 19, 1944, the Germans occupied Hungary in order to stop the attempts of the Hungarian leadership to withdraw from the war and suppress the growing discontent in the country. The German ambassador E. Wesenmeier arrived in Budapest, who, in fact, became the all-powerful Hitlerite governor in the country. The occupation of Hungary and the mass arrests carried out by the Gestapo provoked various forms of resistance from all the major political and social forces in the country. Refuse to contact with

West and M. Horthy, who remained the head of state. In order to withdraw Hungary from the war, he secretly from the Germans sent General I. Nadai to the allies in Italy. General G. Farago also began secret negotiations in Moscow on issues of a truce and conditions for Hungary's withdrawal from the war.

One of the clauses of the preliminary terms of the armistice, signed on October 11 in the Kremlin by V. M. Molotov and G. Farago, obliged Hungary to oppose Germany on the side of the anti-Hitler coalition. In this regard, new appointments were made in the army, troops loyal to Horthy were pulled up to Budapest, the possibility of establishing contacts with the Soviet forward units and joint actions of the armies against the Nazis was groped. On October 15, 1944, M. Horthy spoke on national radio and announced the country's withdrawal from the war, the conclusion of a preliminary truce by Hungary and the appointment of a new commander of the Hungarian army. However, plans for the withdrawal of

Hungary from the war were not destined to come true. The Nazis, seeking to prevent the loss of the last serious ally and relying on the Arrow Cross party close to them, decided to carry out a coup d'état and establish a fascist pro-Hitler regime. On the morning of October 15, a special detachment of the Gestapo, led by the hardened saboteur O. Skorzeny, under the pretext of meeting with Yugoslav partisans, lured Horthy Jr., who was taken out of the country, into a trap, and then ended up in the Mauthausen concentration camp. Horthy's son became an instrument of blackmail and pressure on the 76-year-old regent. Almost simultaneously with this action, the Chief of the General Staff of the Wehrmacht sent an ultimatum to the Chief of the General Staff of the Hungarian army demanding that the recently issued order to the Hungarian units to open the front line in front of the Soviet troops be immediately canceled. On October 16,

1944, saving his life and the life of his family, M. Horthy signed in the royal palace a document on renunciation of power and transfer of the post of head of state to a Hitler protege - a retired colonel of the General Staff, the leader of the Hungarian fascists F. Salashi. Horthy, along with his family, was taken to Germany, where he was kept under the "guard" of the Gestapo (2).

The action to withdraw Hungary from the war was insufficiently prepared in military and organizational terms: neither Horthy's statement on the radio, nor the order for the troops contained instructions for specific actions. For most supporters of a break with Germany, the events of October 15 came as a surprise. And although these events, as stated in one of the police reports, "set in motion resistance organizations in Budapest", uniting "most of the workers, left-wing circles and those social forces that consider it inappropriate to continue the war," the forces of the Hungarian anti-fascists turned out to be too weak and fragmented in order to offer worthy resistance to the Nazis and the putschists.

Even such devoted supporters of Hungary's exit from the war, as the commanders of the 1st and 2nd Hungarian armies, failed to resort to decisive and independent actions. General L. Veresh was arrested a few hours after the start of the putsch. The same fate awaited General B. Dalnoki-Miklos. However, at that time, he, along with his chief of staff, was in negotiations at the location of the headquarters of the 4th Ukrainian Front. Therefore, Miklos from there turned to his soldiers, urging them to turn their weapons against the Germans. However, only about 10 thousand soldiers responded to this call. The Salashist putsch, the establishment of an open fascist

regime and measures to "restore order" led to the arrest of thousands of anti-fascists from a wide variety of population groups. Communists, left-wing Social Democrats and trade unionists were subjected to special persecution. F. Salashi, who called himself the "leader of the party", fulfilled all the wishes of the Nazis. He promised Hitler to put up to one and a half million soldiers, obliged the entire population from 14 to 70 years of forced labor for military needs.

Relying on the Salashists, the Germans managed to quickly change the commanders of the armies, commanders of formations and units, who were objectionable to them, establish control over the Hungarian armed forces and carry out total mobilization. This caused an increase in the resistance of the Hungarian troops at the front. At the same time, Hitler transferred parts of four tank divisions to Budapest. Such a cruel attitude of Germany towards its last fighter

an ally in Europe was determined not only by military-political, but also by economic considerations. The fact is that after the loss of Ploiesti and Romania, 80% of the oil in the Reich came from Hungarian and Austrian sources. Without this oil, Germany would not have been able to continue the

war. In order to prevent the breakthrough of the Red Army into Hungary, Austria and South Germany, as well as to ensure the withdrawal of German troops from Greece, Albania and the southern regions of Yugoslavia, the Nazi command urgently created defenses on the border of Hungary with Romania and Bulgaria. This task was entrusted to the troops of Army Group South under the command of General G. Frisner (from December 28 - General O. Wehler) and part of the forces of Army Group F (commander - Field Marshal M. Weichs). This grouping included the 6th and 8th German, 2nd and 3rd Hungarian armies, which had 3500 guns and mortars, 300 tanks and 550 aircraft (3).

At the same time, the Nazi command urgently erected defensive structures on the paths of a possible offensive by the Red Army. The troops and the local population along the border and inland built several lines of defense: the first - on the border, the second - on the western bank of the Tisza and the third - on the right bank of the Danube. The system of the latter also included fortifications created on the outskirts of Budapest. And to the south-west of the Hungarian capital, the "Margarita Line" was erected along the line of Lake Balaton and Velence to the bend of the Danube near the city of Vitz, further to the Czechoslovak border, this line consisted of three defense lines. Thus, the territory of the last ally of the Third Reich in Europe was thoroughly prepared to repel the attacks of the Red Army, whose troops were approaching the

borders of Hungary. In order to prevent the Red Army from entering Hungary, the German command planned to launch a series of counterattacks. In the directive of the German General Staff of the Ground Forces of September 30, Army Group South was tasked with a strike from the Debrecen area to defeat the Soviet troops that had reached the Romanian-Hungarian border in the area between Oradea and Mako, and to reach such a line that could be held in during the winter by insignificant forces. After that, it was supposed to regroup troops to strike in a southerly direction from

the purpose of capturing exits from the Southern Carpathians. By such actions, it was thought to close the way for the Russian units to Northern Transylvania and the Middle Danube Lowland.

In the current situation, the tasks of the Soviet troops were also clarified. On October 3, the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command ordered the 2nd Ukrainian Front to strike in the northern and northwestern directions, bypassing the Hungarian city of Debrecen from the west and east

(4). At the same time, the Headquarters transferred the 46th Army to the front, and also reinforced its troops with a mechanized and two cavalry corps, an artillery breakthrough division, aviation and a marching replenishment.

The commander of the 2nd Ukrainian Front, Marshal R. Ya. Malinovsky, having received instructions from the Headquarters, immediately began preparing the first offensive operation in Hungary, which was called Debrecen and was carried out without any operational pause. According to the plan, the main blow was delivered in the center of the front by the forces of the 53rd combined arms, 6th guards tank, 1st Romanian armies and the horse-mechanized group of General I. A. Pliev from the area south of Oradea, Battonya in the direction of Debrecen. The troops of the right wing of the front continued to advance in the rear of the Eastern Carpathian grouping of the enemy, and the left wing ensured the offensive of the main forces of the front from the south. By the beginning of the operation, the troops of the 2nd Ukrainian Front

outnumbered the enemy: in people - 3 times, in guns and mortars - 2.9 times, in tanks and self-propelled guns - 2.5 times, and in aircraft - 2 times (5). But, despite such a significant advantage, many difficulties awaited them: in a number of sectors they had to advance in mountainous and wooded areas, fight in settlements with solid stone buildings turned into powerful defense units. The Debrecen operation began on October 6, 1944. During it, the 53rd Army of General I.M. Managarov and the cavalry mechanized group of

General I. A. Pliev. Already on the first day they broke through the main line of defense and by the end of the third day of the offensive they had advanced 100 km to the north. The actions of the 6th Guards Tank Army, General A. G. Kravchenko, were extremely unsuccessful. Advancing in the first echelon, she met very strong enemy resistance, lost a significant number

tanks and could not advance to G. Oradea for a whole week. In such a situation, Marshal R. Ya. Malinovsky was forced to divert the main forces of General Pliev from the task of attacking Debrecen. He turned them sharply to the southeast. By the end of October 12, Pliev's group, in cooperation with the 33rd Rifle Corps, captured G. Oradea, a powerful enemy stronghold in the Debrecen direction.

By the same time, Soviet troops cleared the Hungarian left bank of the Tisza south of Debrecen, liberated Szeged and Cluj. Moving in the direction of Satu Mare, Chop, they contributed to the offensive of the 4th Ukrainian Front in the Carpathians. On October 20, the troops of the center of the 2nd Ukrainian Front captured Debrecen. The advanced units of the Pliev group reached the river. Tisza and cut off the escape routes of the 1st, 2nd Hungarian and

8th German

armies. I. A. Pliev To avoid encirclement, the enemy launched a counterattack on the flanks of the Pliev group with the help of two tank corps and cut its communications south of Nyiregyhaza. After heavy five-day fighting, the Soviet troops left Nyiregyhaza

and joined the main forces of the front on October 27. F.

F. Zhmachenko By the end of October 28, the troops under the command of Marshal R. Ya. Malinovsky, having overcome the strong opposition of the German-Hungarian formations, approached the Tisza on the right wing, reached the eastern bank of the river in the central sector, and forced it on the left wing. At the same time, in the interfluvium of the Tisza - Danube, a large bridgehead was captured - about 120 km along the front and from 20 to 100 km in depth. Within 23 days, they advanced 130-275 km and created the prerequisites for an attack on Budapest. Interacting with the formations of the Hungarian army, Soviet troops defeated 10 enemy divisions, capturing more than 42 thousand people. The losses of the 2nd Ukrainian Front in the Debrecen operation amounted to

over 84 thousand people (6). The exit of Soviet formations to the Debrecen area forced the Nazi command to begin the withdrawal of its troops in front of the center and left wing of the 4th Ukrainian Front in the Carpathians. Here, with part of the headquarters, the commander of the 1st Hun

army, General B. Miklos, who ordered his subordinate units to stop resistance and raise a white flag.

At the suggestion of Marshal of the Soviet Union S. K. Timoshenko, with the order of Miklos, ten captured Hungarian officers were sent across the front line. However, the hopes of the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command for a truce and Hungary's withdrawal from the war did not come true. In the twentieth of October, Soviet intelligence received reliable information about Hitler's punitive measures taken against Hungary, about the removal of Horthy, about the order to the troops of the Hungarian army of Salashi appointed in his place to fight to the last with the Soviet troops. And this order was strictly carried out. Based on this, the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command ordered the Soviet troops "to act on the battlefield

against the Hungarian troops in the same way as against the German ones." With the Red Army advancing from the east and south advancing towards the center of the country, the underground patriotic forces launched preparations for a nationwide uprising. On November 9, 1944, the Liberation Committee of the Hungarian National Uprising (OKVNV) was formed. It was headed by the famous anti-fascist E.

Baichi-Zhyilinski, who managed to escape from a fascist prison. With the participation of the military, an uprising plan was developed, which provided for the expulsion of the Nazis from the country with the support of the Red Army. It was also planned to create an independent and democratic Hungary, carry out fundamental social changes and establish close cooperation with

the USSR. By mid-

November, despite the criticism of the communists who were part of the Hungarian front, the uprising plan was ready (7). A special military headquarters of the OKVNV was formed, the necessary contacts were established, corresponding army and police, as well as work detachments were created, primarily in the capital, special attention was paid to establishing close contacts with the command of the 2nd Ukrainian Front. On November 19,

1944, S. G.

Trofimenko Baichi-Zhilinski also prepared a special message for the top Soviet leadership, in which it was proposed to agree on the following problems: 1) opening the front to

Soviet troops; 2) the transition of the Hungarian units to the side of the Red Army and the formation of a separate army from them with the Hungarian command, which would later take part in joint battles against the Nazis as part of the actions of the Soviet Army; 3) the inclusion of prisoners of war in the Hungarian liberation army; 4) the creation of work detachments and partisan formations from among the volunteers, their armament; 5) establishing the necessary communication between the Soviet troops and the Hungarian insurgent units in the Budapest area (8). However, the Nazis managed to get on the trail of the leaders of the upcoming uprising. On November 22, 1944, his headquarters was arrested. On December 6-8, 1944, the main "instigators" - E. Baichi-Zhylinski and his 10 comrades, including General J. Kissh, Colonel of the General Staff V. Tartshai, Colonel E. Nagy and others - appeared before the military field court. The named persons were sentenced to death, which happened, and the rest - to 10-15 years in prison (9). Thus was put an end to the plans of the Hungarian anti-fascist uprising. In the future, the decapitated national anti-fascist movement, in the absence of another authoritative, influential, organizing and mobilizing force, could rely mainly only on scattered small groups of armed resistance, as well as on partisan struggle, organized mainly by the Red Army command with the involvement of Hungarians who had received special training in anti-fascist schools. partisan struggle on the territory of the USSR. From August 1944, these schools sent more than 10 mixed Soviet-Hungarian parachute detachments

to Hungary to deploy the partisan

movement in the field (10). Only one such school in Obarovo (then transferred to Svyatoshino near Kiev) 1944 660 Hungarian partisans - "professionals" who also know subversive work (11). The most tangible blows against the enemy were delivered by partisan detachments and formations on the territory of Hungary under the command of F. Pataky, D. Usta, S. Nogradi, and others.

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Soviet offensive in Hungary. October 6, 1944 – February 13, 1945

In the industrial region of Miskolc-Diosgyor, as well as in the area of Budapest, in the mining villages around Nograd, Doroga and Tabani, partisan groups, detachments and units of civilian subordination successfully fought. As Colonel-General of the Wehrmacht G. Frisner later wrote, the Hungarian partisans operating in the east and north-east of the country were of particular concern to the Germans. Recalling the battles for the city of Miskolc, he noted: ^When fighting began on the outskirts of this large industrial city, over 20 thousand local workers rebelled^ Obviously, they wanted to transfer industrial enterprises into Soviet hands, if possible intact. At night they organized raids on our positions_” (12). In addition, in the battles near Miskolc, according to the command of the Red Army, about 600 Hungarian partisans participated shoulder to shoulder with the Soviet soldiers (13). The resistance of the population to the Germans manifested itself not only in the protection of industrial enterprises from dismantling, from the export of factory equipment to Germany, but also in sabotage, failure to appear at I. M. Mangarov. cleansing the country from invaders. It lived

by faith in the speedy end of the war and therefore met the Soviet troops as liberators, but at the same time experienced a feeling of fear and anxiety. The command of the Red Army in a special appeal assured the population that it was entering the Hungarian land not as a conqueror, but as a liberator of the Hungarian people from the Nazi yoke (14), that the Red Army did not pursue other goals than the defeat of the Nazi troops, did not intend to break the local orders and establish their own, guarantees the inviolability of private property and the preservation of local authorities, etc. This calmed and encouraged the population. MS Shumilov At the same time, in the eastern regions of the country, after their liberation, there were facts of gathering and summoning the male population aged 15 to 55 years, allegedly for “three days of restoration work,” which, however, ended in their deportation to

the USSR. This fate befell about 40-60 thousand people, most of whom never

returned home. Rumors about this leaked across the front line, which was used by Hitler's propaganda to stir up passions and gave reason to talk either about the eviction of the population behind the front line to Siberia, or about the destruction of people remaining "in the zone of the Reds." Fearing a similar fate, at the initial stage of the battles for Hungary, about half of the citizens of such large cities as Nyiregyhaza, Debrecen and Szeged, before the arrival of the Red Army, left their homes and evacuated to the central regions of the country, retreating before the front line. Soon, however, the mass exodus from the cities stopped when the inevitable defeat of the Nazis became obvious and explanatory work among the population was intensified. It was carried out both by Soviet political agencies and by representatives of the Communist Party who had returned from the USSR to their homeland to establish a peaceful life. On December 11, 1944, the Hungarian delegation headed by G. Farago, sent to Moscow by Horthy, again signed the preliminary terms of the armistice. In the liberated Debrecen, the Provisional National Assembly of Hungary was created on a multi-party basis and the country's Provisional Government headed by General B. Miklos was formed, which adopted the "Program for the Democratic Restoration of Hungary". This happened not only with the knowledge, but also with the direct participation of the Soviet authorities. On December 6, Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the USSR Dekanozov recommended to the member of the Military Council of the 2nd Ukrainian Front, Colonel-General I. Z. Susaykov and the political adviser to the authorized representative of the USSR government in Hungary G. M. Pushkin "as deputy chairman of the Provisional National Assembly to have an absolutely reliable person to influence the entire course of the work of the congregation. In a note addressed to Stalin, the same Dekanozov reported on December 22: "The composition of the government of the government declaration was adopted in full accordance with the projects outlined by us."

Hungarian

And

text

Provisional Government, which included representatives of 4 parties (Communist, Social Democratic, Independent Party of Small Farmers and

national peasant) and well-known personalities in the country, including the highest Horthy officers who went over to the side

Soviet troops, in particular G. Farago, December 28 declared war on Germany. On the same day, a delegation went to Moscow, which on January 20, 1945, on behalf of the new government, signed an armistice agreement. In accordance with this document, Hungary undertook to provide material and armed assistance in the defeat of fascism, pay reparations in favor of the USSR, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, bear the costs of maintaining the Allied Control Commission (JCC) and comply with all its instructions and orders.

In connection with the signing of the agreement, a representative of the Soviet command, who studied the situation on the ground, reported to Moscow in May 1945 the following: "The most important factor that influenced the political mood of the population is the expected and then signed armistice agreement between the Soviet Union and Hungary. The mere fact of concluding this agreement aroused universal approval. The terms of the truce are regarded by the population as difficult, but fair and feasible. The exceptions are the clauses of the agreement on reparations and on Northern Transylvania. Many Hungarians believe that, given the current economic situation in the country, Hungary is unable to pay 300 million US dollars, or that it will be able to pay this amount only if it receives help from outside. The opinion is also expressed that the question of Northern Transylvania should be reconsidered over time in favor of Hungary" (15). This assessment of the situation and the mood of the population quite accurately reflected the reality. The

creation of the

Provisional Government was supposed to contribute to the process of liberation of the country's territories still occupied by the Germans. With the completion of the Debrecen operation, the Headquarters ordered Marshal Malinovsky to immediately launch an offensive against the Hungarian capital with the forces of the 46th Army. R. Ya. Malinovsky, in a telephone conversation with I. V. Stalin, for better preparation of the Budapest operation, asked to delay its start for several days, but ^ (The Supreme Commander, referring to political conditions, insisted on an immediate offensive "(16).

In the Hungarian the capital, the enemy created a well-equipped defensive line in terms of engineering. Defensive structures covered the city in semi-arcs from the east

and rested their flanks on the Danube. According to Soviet intelligence, Budapest was prepared for a long siege, the main forces of Army Group Center and parts of the Hungarian troops were concentrated in its area. They had significant stocks of weapons, ammunition, food, medical and other property.

To coordinate the plan for capturing Budapest, Marshal S.K. Timoshenko invited the commanders of the fronts. After listening to their proposals, Timoshenko decided: ^ (We will bypass Budapest from the south and north, aiming for a frontal strike with minimal forces. As far as I know, the upcoming talks between Stalin and Molotov with Churchill and Eden in Moscow will require a speedy solution to the Hungarian problem. Therefore, count on lengthy preparations to the operation is not necessary. It is necessary to sharply intensify the offensive in the zone of the 4th Ukrainian Front, especially in conjunction with the 40th Army. The terrain and the weather are not very favorable for this. It is necessary to use aviation to the maximum, including for the delivery of various cargoes to the troops. "29 October 46th Army under the command of General I.T.

V. Sviridov were only 15 km from Budapest, but they could not enter the city on the move. The enemy defense held out. In addition, the German command quickly transferred three tank and one motorized divisions to Budapest, which, having taken defensive contours, were able to stop the advance of the Soviet troops. On November 4, the

Headquarters of the Supreme Command demanded that Malinovsky speed up the withdrawal of front troops to the right bank of the Tisza in order to defeat the enemy's Budapest grouping

with strikes from the north, northeast and south (17). Fulfilling these instructions, the troops of the front resumed the offensive on November 11. It lasted 16 days. However, it was not possible to cut and defeat the Budapest grouping east of the city. The second attempt to capture Budapest was unsuccessful.

On November 24, S. K. Timoshenko sent an explanatory note to the Headquarters of the Supreme Command about the reasons for the delay of Soviet troops near Budapest. He accused the command of the 2nd Ukrainian Front of irrational dispersion of forces in several directions, which prevented them from concentrating their efforts on

solving the main task. S. K. Goryunov The Headquarters agreed with Timoshenko's arguments and on November 26 demanded that the commander of the 2nd Ukrainian Front create a significant superiority of forces over the enemy in the decisive direction, concentrating breakthrough artillery divisions and tank formations here. More active tasks to defeat the Hungarian group were also assigned to the troops of the 3rd Ukrainian Front. Timoshenko himself was given instructions: "Due to the fact that the 4th Ukrainian Front is not fulfilling its assigned tasks, and its offensive would facilitate the offensive of the troops of the 2nd Ukrainian Front, the Headquarters suggests that you immediately go to Petrov and force him to complete the task." The operation of the 2nd Ukrainian Front was scheduled to begin on December 5 or 6. It became the property of the enemy. Literally a day after the order of Marshal R. Ya. Malinovsky to organize an offensive, General Frisner in a directive to the commander of the 6th Army, stating the regrouping of Soviet troops that had begun, noted "a change in the operational plans of the Russian command" and his intention to "force the Danube between Budapest and Lake Balaton in north direction." On December 5, 1944, the 2nd Ukrainian Front resumed its offensive. For eight days, the troops of the center and the left wing tried to surround the enemy by outflanking from the north and southwest. At the same time, the mobile formations of the front reached the river border with Czechoslovakia. Ipel, together with the 7th Guards Army of General M.S. Shumilov, reached the left bank of the Danube near G. Vitz (20 km north of Budapest) and, advancing from Vitz in a southerly direction, overcame the first and second lanes of the outer bypass of Budapest. At the same time, the 46th Army crossed the Danube 15 km south of Budapest and captured a bridgehead 14 km in size along the front and 10-16 km in depth. But due to lack of strength and

F. I. Tolbukhin

At this time, the troops of Marshal F.I. Tolbukhin were completing the regrouping from the Belgrade to the Budapest direction. Their full concentration in the area of the cities of Baia, Makhach, Sombor (135-180 km south of Budapest) was completed by November 25-26. In parallel with the process of regrouping, the front crossed the Danube in the area of concentration with part of its forces and captured an important bridgehead. Relying on it, the 57th and 4th Guards armies of generals M.N. Sharokhin and G.F. Zakharov went on the offensive on November 27, liberated the transdanubian part of Hungary and Yugoslav territory between the Danube and Drava rivers, and by December 9 reached the line of lakes Velence, Balaton, G. Barch (80 km south of Balaton). This created a real opportunity to strike at the rear of the Budapest grouping of the enemy from the west. In order to prepare such a strike, Marshal Tolbukhin ordered the troops of the front to gain a foothold on the achieved lines in front of the enemy defensive line ^ (Margarita. "By the moment under consideration, the German command, due to the OKH reserve, new formations and regrouping, increased the composition of Army Group ^ South "from 38 to 51 divisions and brigades (18). Nevertheless, the enemy was inferior to the Soviet troops in forces and means. Thus, the strike group of the 3rd Ukrainian Front outnumbered the enemy in people - 3.3 times, in guns - 4.8 times, in tanks and self-p

At the same time, the pace of construction of defensive lines, stretching from north to south, increased. Particularly great attention was paid to the construction of fortified positions in the area of the city of Budapest itself, the so-called Attila line. Its construction began in August 1944 and continued almost until January 1945. Three horseshoe-shaped defensive belts were built, which covered Budapest from the east. The ends of the "horseshoes" rested

on the Danube north and south of the city. The first lane ran at a distance of 25-30 km from the Danube and consisted of 3-5 continuous trenches, interconnected by communications. In front of this strip, wire obstacles were installed along the entire length, anti-tank ditches were dug for a considerable distance and minefields were laid.

The second lane ran at a distance of 5-12 km from the first and consisted of 1-3 continuous lines of trenches covered with wire fences, and in some areas - and

minefields. The third lane, passing through the suburbs of Budapest, included from 3 to 6-7 lines of trenches, tightly covered with barbed wire and minefields. In addition, the enemy made extensive use of stone structures and railroad tracks for defense. Thus, he managed to create a continuous zone of defensive structures 25-30 km deep to the east of the city. Assessing the composition and distribution of German and Hungarian troops

in directions, the Soviet command came to the conclusion that the enemy intended not only to keep Budapest behind him, but also to prevent the Red Army from entering Czechoslovakia and Austria. In such a situation, on December 12, the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command decided, with the troops of the 2nd and 3rd Ukrainian fronts, first of all to defeat the Budapest grouping and capture the city of Budapest. To this end, she ordered Marshal Malinovsky to transfer the 46th Army with reinforcements to Marshal Tolbukhin and set tasks for both fronts to prepare for joint actions (20). The essence of the plan was to break through the enemy defenses north and southwest of Budapest with the forces of two fronts and, advancing towards each other, surround the enemy grouping, and then with simultaneous strikes from the west and

east to take over the city.

G. F.

Zakharov After analyzing the intelligence data received, the commander of the troops of the 2nd Ukrainian Front, in agreement with Marshal S. K. Timoshenko and the Supreme Command Headquarters, postponed the transition to the offensive. At the direction of the Headquarters (directive of December 12, 1944), the troops of the 2nd and 3rd Ukrainian fronts were to launch frontal attacks on the enemy's defenses in two sectors - north and southwest of Budapest - to develop a breakthrough with tank formations towards each other and , using operational coverage and detour, to surround the Budapest grouping of the enemy. At the same time, they were supposed to strike towards each other with adjacent formations and capture Budapest. The offensive was planned to begin on

December 19-20. Thus, the defeat of the Budapest enemy grouping was supposed to be carried out by encircling it and then

destruction by the forces of two fronts. The commander of the 2nd Ukrainian Front was supposed to strike a front strike group consisting of two tank armies and General Pliev's cavalry-mechanized group to strike from the Shakhi region with the task of reaching the northern bank of the Danube and preventing the

enemy grouping from retreating to the northwest. The 3rd Ukrainian Front was to use the forces of two combined arms armies, two mechanized, one tank and one cavalry corps to strike from the area of Lake Velice to the north, reach the southern bank of the Danube and

cut off the enemy's retreat to the west. The

offensive, which began on December 20, developed successfully. In the zone of the 2nd Ukrainian Front, the 6th Panzer Army, having broken through the enemy defenses on its own, began to rapidly advance in a northwestern direction.

But the enemy also reacted quite quickly to the success of the Soviet troops. On December 21, he launched a counterattack with tanks and infantry in the general direction of Shakhi. The attack, which also continued on December 22 and 23, involved units of three tank divisions (about 125 tanks). Simultaneously with this counterattack, the Nazis went on the offensive in secondary directions. Having broken through the front of the right-flank formations of the 7th Guards Army, by the end of December 22, the enemy grouping with tank units entered the area, from where the offensive of the 6th Guards Tank Army had begun two days before. MN

Sharokhin But,

delivering a counterattack, the enemy put his left flank under attack. The commander of the 2nd Ukrainian Front took advantage of this. On December 21, he ordered the commander of the 6th Guards Tank Army, hiding behind part of the forces from the north, with the main forces to strike south, along the eastern bank of the Gron River, in order to encircle and destroy the enemy grouping in the Ipel interfluvium in cooperation with the 7th Guards Army and

Gron. N. A. Gagen On
December

22, the tank army went to the rear of the enemy's Sakalosh strike group. Its sharp turn to the south gave a very sharp character to the struggle that unfolded in the interfluvium. Soviet

tankers, destroying enemy manpower and military equipment, stubbornly advanced in the indicated direction and on December 26 approached the mouth of the Gron River. On the same day, mobile troops of the 3rd Ukrainian Front entered the area from the south. There was a connection of troops from both fronts on the line of the outer front of the encirclement of the Budapest grouping of the enemy. On December 27, the encirclement of enemy units operating in the interfluvium of the Gron and Ipel was completed. In the next three days, this grouping, which consisted of four regiments of infantry and numbering up to 70 tanks, was completely destroyed.

As a result of the main operation, when, by the end of December 26, the troops of the 2nd and 3rd Ukrainian fronts joined at Esztergom (35 km northwest of Budapest), the encirclement of the 188,000th enemy group was completed (about 10 divisions and a number of units of military branches). Only the task of capturing the western part of the Hungarian capital remained unfulfilled, which the enemy turned into a powerful fortified area. A. Hitler, being

dissatisfied with the actions of Generals I. Frisner and K. Freter, on December 24 appointed General O. Wöhler as commander of Army Group South, and General M. Balk as commander of the 6th Army. At the same time, there was a constant strengthening of the grouping of troops of Army Group South. If by the beginning of the Debrecen operation, the troops of the 2nd and 3rd Ukrainian fronts were opposed by 4 tank and 3 motorized divisions, then by the end of 1944, 13 tank and 2 motorized divisions were already operating against them.

Reflection of enemy counterattacks and liquidation of the encircled enemy groupings in Budapest. January 2 - February 13, 1945

On December 28, the new commander of Army Group South, indicating in the operational directive that a further offensive of Soviet troops should be expected on both sides of the Danube to the west, as well as against the 8th Army, determined the further tasks of his formations.

The 2nd Panzer Army was to create a deep defense "from the line of the front line to the position of Margarita" and "to prevent an enemy breakthrough in the direction of the oil

district". The army group "Balk" was supposed to prevent the breakthrough of Soviet troops to the south before the arrival of reinforcements and

north of the Danube. The garrison of Budapest was asked to "hold out until the moment of liberation from the siege." On December 29, the command of both fronts, in order to avoid further bloodshed and the destruction of Budapest, presented an ultimatum to the encircled troops to surrender. However, the enemy command not only rejected this humane act, but also ordered the assassination of the truce captains M. Steinmetz and I. A. Ostapenko, committing a blatant act of dishonor and violation of international law on the inviolability of the truce. Then the Soviet troops began to eliminate the encircled enemy. But this process turned out to be lengthy.

The German command, having concentrated near Budapest almost half of all tank and motorized divisions available on the Soviet-German front (21), in the period from January 2 to 26, launched three strong counterattacks on the troops of the 3rd Ukrainian Front.

In the fierce battles that unfolded, the troops of Marshal Tolbukhin, despite the superiority of the German troops in tanks, not only stopped their advance, but also threw them back to their original positions. A significant role in this was played by the skillful maneuver of the Soviet troops, the rapid creation of new defensive lines on the enemy's distribution routes and the offensive of the troops of the right wing of the 2nd Ukrainian Front in the direction of Komarno (22), in the rear of the enemy's counterstrike grouping. Directly in the city, the battles were fought by a specially created Budapest group of troops, headed by General I. M. Afonin (since January 22 - General I. M. Managarov). It consisted of four rifle corps from both fronts and, until January 18, one Romanian army corps. The battles for the liberation of the eastern part of the city (Pest) went on from December 27 to January 18, and its western part (Buda) - from January 20 to February 13. The conditions of the assault were a severe test for the inhabitants of Budapest. The commander of the 9th SS Corps, who was in the besieged capital, characterizing their mood, wrote the following with apprehension in his diary on January 10: "The civilian population is in an extremely agitated state. People practically do not receive food, large quarters of the city are left without water, lighting, and discontent is growing" (23).

Although the offensive of the Soviet troops developed slowly, the position of the encircled enemy was getting worse. If at first 40-45 aircraft daily delivered the necessary cargo for him, then from January 20, the supply was disrupted by Soviet aviation.

On the night of January 21, the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command sent a telegram stating: "Assign Marshal Timoshenko to coordinate the actions of the troops of the 2nd and 3rd Ukrainian fronts." After that, the actions of these two associations became more coordinated and effective. The enemy, squeezed in Budapest, was continuously exposed to artillery fire and air strikes, periodically reconnaissance probed his defenses and loosened the actions of small infantry detachments. To fight in such conditions

became more and more

difficult. On February 4, before dawn, the commander of the defense of Budapest, Lieutenant General Pfeffer-Wildenbruch, was brought a telegram. He hoped that Berlin had given permission for the surrender of the encircled group. But instead I read that "in connection with the successes of the German troops near Budapest," the Fuhrer awarded him the rank of Colonel General of the SS troops and awarded him the Oak Leaves to the Knight's Cross. Other officers of the Budapest group were also awarded

high awards. It seemed like a vicious mockery of

people. The commander immediately remembered the case of promotion in the military rank of General Paulus, surrounded with the 6th Army near Stalingrad, and other illogical acts of the Fuhrer. But he could no longer do anything with Hitler's whims or with the real situation. On February 13, on the hill of Buda, in the area of the castle and the royal

palace, the last shots were fired. The commander of the defense of the Hungarian capital, having lost all sorts of

hopes, ordered the white flag to be thrown out of the basement of the military school, where the remnants of his headquarters were located. The last stronghold in Southeastern Europe fell under the blows of Soviet weapons. The enemy in Budapest lost up to 50 thousand killed and 138 thousand prisoners.

VA Sudets

The Budapest operation ended. During this operation, Soviet troops advanced from 120 to 240 km, liberated about 45

% of the territory of Hungary (and taking into account the Debrecen operation - 74%) and created the conditions for a further offensive in Czechoslovakia. The most important result of this operation was the fact that the Soviet troops forced the German command to transfer to the southern flank of the Soviet-German front a large number of formations, especially tank and motorized ones, which were extremely necessary for him to repel the offensive of the Red Army in the Warsaw-Berlin direction in January - February 1945

These results were achieved at a high price. The human losses of the Soviet troops amounted to 320,082 people, of which 80,082 were irretrievable (taking into account the Debrecen operation, respectively, 404,092 and 99,739 people). In addition, during the fighting they lost

1766 tanks and self-propelled guns, 4127 guns and mortars, 293 combat aircraft (24).

The population of the Hungarian capital, which survived not only the fascist occupation, but also 108 difficult days of the blockade, greeted the Soviet soldiers with relief, albeit with conflicting feelings. The influence of fascist propaganda, which instilled fear in the population and depicted Soviet soldiers in the form of "red devils", as well as rumors about Stalin's camps and the activities of the NKVD, had an effect (25). At the same time, the information that "there are Hungarians among the Russian liberators" who went over to their side gave people hope. Many Hungarian soldiers and officers took part in the

battles for the liberation of Buda, who voluntarily went over to the side of the Soviet troops. According to the memoirs of General S. M. Shtemenko, these Hungarian volunteer soldiers "words did not differ from deeds." It was from among them, according to incomplete data, that about 600 people died a heroic death in the battles for the liberation of Budapest from the invaders (26). The rest of the Hungarian volunteers - a total of about 3200 people - formed the basis of the Buda Volunteer Regiment under the command of Colonel O. Varihazy (27). The destruction of the German group in the Hungarian capital

accelerated the process of

expelling the Nazi invaders from the country, increased the ferment in the Hungarian army, the transition of its soldiers to the partisans or to the side

Red Army. The total number of Hungarians who, with weapons in their hands, fought on the side of the Soviet troops against the Germans, according to estimates by Hungarian historians, was approximately 6-6.5 thousand people (28).

But do not forget that together with the German troops, about 11 divisions of the 1st and 3rd Hungarian armies fought against the Red Army. The mass surrender of their soldiers and officers began only with the completion of the liberation of the territory of Hungary. For example, from 28 to 30 March alone, 45,000 Hungarians were taken prisoner in the areas bordering Austria (29). Hungary actually remained an ally of Germany until the Red Army completely captured its territory. Three days after

the capture of Budapest, the Headquarters of the

Supreme High Command assigned new tasks to the 2nd and 3rd Ukrainian fronts. The troops of Marshal Malinovsky were to strike in the general direction towards Bratislava, Vienna, and the 3rd Ukrainian Front - no later than the 15th day of the operation, to enter the Austrian-Hungarian border, defeating the enemy grouping north of Lake Balaton. In the future, the front was to assist the troops of Marshal Malinovsky and, together with them, capture Vienna (30). However, the plan developed by the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command had to be amended, as the

enemy launched a counteroffensive in the area of Lake Balaton. The defense of the Soviet troops in the area of this lake became another bright page in the history of the Great Patriotic War.

war.

Attaching great importance to the counter-offensive in the area of Lake Balaton, the German command transferred there from the west the 6th SS Panzer Army, which was armed with a significant number of Panther, Tiger and ^ (King Tiger) tanks, assault guns and anti-tank guns on self-propelled In total, more than 30 divisions operated in front of the 3rd Ukrainian Front, including 11 tank divisions, 3 battle groups and a motorized brigade. They numbered over 430 thousand soldiers and officers, more than 5600 guns and mortars, about 900 tanks and assault guns and 850 aircraft (31) By concentrating such forces, the German command hoped, by throwing back the 3rd Ukrainian Front across the Danube, to secure the industrial regions of Austria and South Germany,

keep Hungary as an ally, divert the attention of the Soviet command from

central direction. The 3rd

Ukrainian Front, having more than 400 thousand people, about 7 thousand guns and mortars, 400 tanks and self-propelled guns, built a defense on four lanes (32). Making the main bet on the fire defeat of the advancing troops, the Soviet command created quite high operational densities of anti-tank artillery (18 guns per 1 km of front), minefields (up to 270 anti-tank and 2500 anti-personnel mines per 1 km). The enemy offensive began on the night of March 6. The main blow was dealt to the troops of the 4th Guards and 26th Armies, who were defending between the lakes Velence and Balaton. Having concentrated a powerful armored fist (in some directions up to 60 tanks were thrown per 1 km of the breakthrough area), the enemy tried to dismember the Soviet troops and reach

Danube.

The defending troops met the onslaught of the German-Hungarian formations with powerful artillery fire and air strikes. On March 6, aviation of the 17th Air Army carried out 368 sorties, including 227 against enemy tank divisions (33). As soon as the direction of his main attack was determined, the commander of the front troops reinforced the defense zone of the 26th army with his reserve and units of the 4th Guards Army. At the cost of heavy losses, the Germans and Hungarians on the first day of the offensive managed to penetrate into the defense of this army up to 3-4 km. In the following days, the intensity of the fighting did not decrease.

Hot battles with the enemy were in the air. On March 9, a group of seven Yak-3s led by the squadron commander, Captain A.I. Koldunov, entered into battle with two groups of German aircraft. They had 10 Focke-Wulfs and 8 Messerschmitts. Having shot down 5 enemy planes, the Soviet pilots did not allow air strikes on the positions of the 135th Rifle

Corps and returned to airfield (34).

For eight days the enemy rammed the defenses of the troops of the 3rd Ukrainian Front, and on the ninth day he brought his last reserve into battle - the 6th Panzer Division. The attacks of the tank group, which included up to 300 tanks and assault guns, followed one after another for another two days. Warriors of the 27th Army held it back

onslaught and forced to stop the attacks. During the 10 days of the offensive, the enemy strike force operating east of Lake Balaton, was able to overcome the main and in some places the second defensive line, advancing 20-30 km. South of the lake Balaton from March 6 to 20, enemy troops penetrated the defenses of the 57th Army by only 6-8 km. Their attempts to break through the Drava River to the northeast were completely unsuccessful. Formations of the 1st Bulgarian and 3rd Yugoslav armies, together with the Soviet units, repelled the blow of the troops of the Army Group ^E. The repulse of the enemy

counteroffensive

in the area of Lake Balaton was the last major defensive operation of the Soviet troops. The armies of the 3rd Ukrainian Front, in cooperation with the Bulgarian and Yugoslav troops, thwarted the plan of the German leadership. In these battles, the qualitative superiority of the Soviet tank forces, armed with the best IS-2 and T-34 tanks in the world and self-propelled artillery mounts of the Su-100 type, was demonstrated. During the counteroffensive, the enemy lost over 40,000 soldiers and officers, over 300 guns and mortars, about 500 tanks and assault guns, and over 200 aircraft (35). The losses of the Soviet troops amounted to 32,899

Human.

The fighting in the Lake Balaton area was still in full swing when the commanders of the troops

of the 2nd and 3rd Ukrainian fronts received a directive to go on the offensive. Taking into account the current situation, the direction of the main attack was changed: if earlier it was planned to deliver it north of the Danube, now the troops had to launch an offensive south of this river (36).

Surrender on March 16, that is, the day
after the

completion of the defensive operation, the 3rd Ukrainian Front went on the offensive. Overcoming the strong resistance of the enemy, his troops advanced 3-7 km. In order to speed up the defeat of the enemy tank grouping between the lakes Velence and Balaton, the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command placed the 6th Guards Tank Army at the disposal of F.I. Tolbukhin, withdrawing it from the 2nd Ukrainian Front (37). Aircraft

The 17th Air Army delivered strikes against enemy columns on the roads, at its

communication centers, defensive structures and airfields. On the same days, a number of attacks on important enemy targets were also inflicted by allied aviation, in particular, putting out of action 70% of oil refineries in Komarno (38). Developing the offensive, the troops under the command of Marshal Tolbukhin on March 22 took the city of Szekesfehervar with battle. However, they could not surround and destroy the 6th SS Panzer Army. At the cost of heavy losses, the enemy managed to withdraw most of its forces and assets from the operational bag formed by the Soviet troops. And the 46th Army of this front surrounded a 17,000-strong enemy grouping in the Tovarosh area and, together with the landing of the Danube military flotilla and the 23rd Tank Corps, completed the liquidation of the enemy on March 26, repulsing his strong counterattacks on the outer front of the encirclement. Building on the success achieved, the troops of the 46th Army and the right wing of the 3rd Ukrainian Front by March 26 broke through the enemy defenses between the Danube and Balaton, overcame the mountains of Vertesh and Bakon and, advancing to a depth of 80 km,

created the conditions for an attack on Vienna. So, hostilities in Hungary ended. The end of the war itself was drawing near. What did the participation of the Hungarian state in it give, fighting on the side of the Third Reich almost to the complete loss of its territory? What are the main results of the war for the Hungarian people? They can be summarized briefly as follows. The country again lost those territories that were transferred to it by the powers of the "axis", and lost 40% of its national wealth (39). Within its modern borders alone, Hungary lost about 1 million people (40), including 160 thousand killed at the front, 280 thousand killed in captivity, about 100 thousand civilians, 350 thousand Jews and Gypsies killed in concentration camps. In addition, about 350 thousand more Hungarians left the country before advance of the Soviet troops.

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Chapter 4 Catastrophe of the Wehrmacht in East Prussia

Prussia is a state, then a land in Germany. The main historical core is Brandenburg, which merged in 1918 with the Duchy of Prussia, which arose in 1525 on part of the lands of the Teutonic Order (the order conquered the Prussians in the 13th century - a group of Baltic tribes that inhabited part of the southern coast of the Baltic Sea). The Brandenburg-Prussian state became in 1701 the kingdom of Prussia (capital Berlin). The leading role in the

economic and political life of Prussia was played by the Junkers - large German landowners with a stronghold in East Prussia. The Prussian kings from the Hohenzollern dynasty (Frederick II and others) in the 18th - first half of the 19th centuries significantly expanded the territory of the state. In 1871, the Prussian Junkers, led by Bismarck, completed the unification of Germany with iron and blood. The Prussian king also became the German emperor. As a result of the November Revolution of 1918 in Germany, the monarchy in Prussia was abolished. Since 1945, Germany has been divided into separate lands. In 1947, the Control Council passed a law on the liquidation of the Prussian state as a stronghold of militarism and reaction. By the end of 1945, the

importance of East Prussia as a military industrial region and Germany's main food base had increased dramatically. Having lost previously occupied lands in a number of European countries, as well as many sources of strategic raw materials, the Nazi leaders tried to save East Prussia for a number of reasons. Large enterprises of the military, shipbuilding and machine-building industries operated here, supplying the Wehrmacht with weapons and ammunition. East Prussia had significant manpower and food resources. The roads to Pomerania and Berlin, to the vital centers of Germany, passed through its territory. From a strategic point of view, it was important that

The naval bases and ports of East Prussia on the Baltic Sea, advanced far to the east, allowed the fascist German command to base large fleet forces, as well as maintain contact with the divisions cut off in Courland. The leaders of the Wehrmacht were well aware of the political, economic and strategic importance of East Prussia. Therefore, extensive work was carried out here to improve the system of field and long-term fortifications. Numerous hills, lakes, swamps, rivers, canals and forests contributed to the creation of defense. Of particular importance was the presence in the central part of East Prussia of the Masurian Lakes, which divided the Soviet troops advancing from the east into two groups - northern and southern, complicating the interaction between them. ID Chernyakhovsky The construction of fortifications in East

Prussia began long before the start of the war. All of them were covered by ditches, wooden, metal and reinforced concrete gouges for a considerable distance. The basis of only one Heilsberg fortified area was 911 long-term

defensive structures. A.M. Vasilevsky On the

territory of East Prussia, in the region of Rastenburg, under the cover of the Masurian Lakes from the moment of the attack on the USSR and until 1944, Hitler's Headquarters "Wolfschanze" was located in a deep underground, located 1 km east of the city of Rastenburg (Kętrzyn). It was built with the strictest secrecy by the Todt military construction organization in the winter and spring of 1941. It was a piece of terrain fenced with barbed wire, fields and ditches, on which carefully disguised reinforced concrete bunkers were located, half going into the ground. The bunkers were equipped with apartments, offices of German leaders. Hitler's bunker was located in the northern part of the ^ (Wolfschanze), had walls 6 meters thick, was surrounded by barbed wire, which was under high voltage current. The camp was guarded by the "SS battalion of the Führer's personal guard". The headquarters of the High Command of the Wehrmacht (OKW) was also located here) and a large underground communication center.

Nearby was the headquarters of the ground forces and the air force (Luftwaffe). The defeats on the Soviet-German front forced the Wehrmacht command to take additional measures to defend the Headquarters. In the autumn of 1944, the General Staff of the Ground Forces approved a plan for the construction of facilities on the entire Eastern Front, including in East Prussia. In accordance with this plan, old fortifications were hastily modernized on its territory and in northern Poland and field defenses were created, which included the Ilmenhorst, Letzen, Allenstein, Heilsberg, Mýawa and Torun fortified areas, as well as 13 ancient fortresses. During the construction of fortifications, advantageous natural boundaries, solid stone structures of numerous farms and large settlements, interconnected by a well-developed network of highways and railways, were used. Between the defensive strips there were a large number of cut-off positions and separate defense units. As a result, a fortified defensive system was created, the depth of which reached 150-200 km. It was the most developed in terms of engineering to the north of the Masurian Lakes, where in the direction of Gumbinnen, Königsberg

there were nine

fortified lanes. A little

over a hundred days and the same number of nights continued the East Prussian strategic offensive operation of the Soviet Armed Forces, carried out from January 13 to April 26, 1945 by the troops of the 3rd Belorussian (commander - General of the Army I. D. Chernyakhovsky, from February 20 - Marshal Soviet Union A. V.

Vasilevsky, member of the Military Council - Lieutenant General V. E. Makarov, Chief of Staff - Colonel General

A. N. Pokrovsky) and the 2nd Belorussian (commander - Marshal of the Soviet Union K. K. Rokossovsky, member of the Military Council - Lieutenant General N. E. Subbotin, Chief of Staff - Lieutenant General (from February 17 - Colonel General A. N. Bogolyubov) of the fronts, as well as part of the forces of the 1st Baltic Front (commander - General of the Army I. Kh. Bagramyan, member of the Military Council - Lieutenant General M. V. Rudakov, chief of staff - Colonel General V. V. Kurasov).

The operation was assisted by ships of the Red Banner Baltic Fleet (commander - Vice Admiral N. K. Smirnov, chief of staff - Rear Admiral A. N. Popov). The actions of the ground and naval forces were supported by long-range aviation - the 18th Air Army (commander - Chief Marshal of Aviation A.E.

Golovanov, chief of staff - lieutenant general of aviation N. V. Perminov).

East Prussian operation (January 13 - April 26, 1945) It was one of the largest operations of the Great Patriotic War, as a result of which 32 enemy divisions, numbering up to 320 thousand soldiers and officers, were surrounded. During the fighting, the Red Army completely destroyed more than 25 enemy divisions, 12 divisions lost from 50 to 75%. The Wehrmacht lost 120 thousand killed and missing, 194 thousand prisoners. The fighting took place in a strip of 455 km to a depth of more than 200 km. As part of this strategic offensive operation, the Insterburg-Koenigsberg, Migav-Elbing, Koenigsberg and

Zemland operations were successfully carried out. The main forces of the 2nd Belorussian Front began the East Pomeranian operation on February 10. The defense of East Prussia and Northern Poland was entrusted to Army Group Center under the command of General G. Reinhardt. It occupied the line from the mouth of the Neman to the mouth of the Western Bug and consisted of the 3rd tank, 4th and 2nd armies. In total, by the beginning of the offensive of the Soviet troops, the enemy grouping numbered 35 infantry, 4 tank and 4 motorized divisions, a scooter brigade and 2 separate groups (1). The greatest density of forces and assets was created in the Insterburg and Mlava directions.

In the reserve of the high command and armies were two infantry, four tank and three motorized divisions, a separate group and a scooter brigade, which accounted for almost a quarter of the total number of all formations. They were mainly located in the region of the Masurian Lakes, and partly in the Ilmenhorst and Mlavsky fortified regions. Such a grouping of reserves allowed the enemy to carry out maneuvers to launch counterattacks against the Soviet troops advancing north and south of the Masurian Lakes. In addition, on

On the territory of East Prussia, various auxiliary and special units and subunits were stationed (fortress, reserve, training, police, naval, transport, security), as well as parts of the Volkssturm and Hitler Youth detachments, which then took part in defensive operations. The ground forces supported the aircraft of the 6th Air Fleet. The ships of the Wehrmacht Navy, based in the Baltic Sea, for the defense of sea lanes, were intended for artillery support of troops in coastal areas, as well as coast. According to the plan developed by January 1945, Army Group Center had the task, relying on fortified defenses, to stop the

advance of Soviet troops deep into East Prussia and tie them down for a long time. The General Staff of the German Ground Forces also prepared an active version of the military operations of the Army Group Center: inflicting a counterattack from East Prussia on the flank and rear of the central grouping of Soviet troops operating in the Berlin direction. It should come into force upon the successful accomplishment of defensive missions by Army Group Center and its possible strengthening at the expense of the Courland grouping. It was also planned to release a number of divisions as the front line was leveled by eliminating the ledges in the defense and withdrawing the troops of the 4th Army behind the line of the Masurian Lakes. German statesmen and military leaders, natives of East Prussia, who had extensive possessions there (G. Goering, E. Koch, V. Weiss, G. Guderian and

others), insisted on strengthening Army Group Center even at the expense of weakening defenses in other areas front. In his appeal to the Volkssturm, E. Koch called for defending this area, arguing that with the loss of it, all of Germany would perish. In an attempt to strengthen the morale of the troops and the population, the fascist command launched a broad chauvinist propaganda. The entry of Soviet troops into East Prussia was used to intimidate the Germans, who, allegedly, from young to old, are expected to face imminent death. In essence, everyone capable of carrying weapons was enrolled in the Volkssturm. Fascist ideologists continued to stubbornly repeat that if the Germans showed high stamina, the Soviet troops would not be able to overcome the "impregnable

fortifications of East Prussia. Thanks to the new weapons, which should go into service, "we will still win," said the Minister of Propaganda I. Goebbels. "When and how is the Führer's business" (2). With the help of social demagoguery, repression and other measures, the Nazis tried to force the population of Germany to fight to the last man. ^ (Every bunker, every quarter of a German city and every German village, - emphasized Hitler's order, - must turn into a fortress, in which the enemy will either bleed to death, or the garrison of this fortress will die in hand-to-hand combat under its ruins ^ In this severe struggle for the existence of the German people should not be spared even monuments of art and other

NI Krylov

Ideological indoctrination was accompanied by repressions of the military command. An order was announced in the troops on receipt, which demanded to keep East Prussia at all costs. To strengthen discipline and instill general fear in the army and rear, Hitler's directive on the death penalty "with the immediate execution of death sentences before the ranks" was carried out with particular cruelty (4). Consider the position of the Soviet troops in this strategic direction and the plans of the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command.

By the beginning of 1945, the troops of the left wing of the 1st Baltic Front were on the Neman River, from its mouth to the Sudarga. To the south, in the Gumbinnen direction, the 3rd Belorussian Front jutted out into East Prussia in a wide ledge, which occupied the line as far as Augustow. The troops of the 2nd Belorussian Front entrenched along the Augustow Canal, the rivers Beaver, Narew and Western Bug, east of the city of Modlin. They held two

operational bridgeheads on the right bank of the Narew. During the period of preparation for the offensive, the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command replenished the fronts with personnel, weapons and military equipment, and carried out major regroupings of troops. As early as the end of 1944, the 2nd shock army was transferred to the 2nd Belorussian Front from its reserve, and the 65th and 70th armies along with their bands from the 1st Belorussian Front. The 3rd Belorussian Front was replenished at the expense of the 2nd Guards Army, which previously operated in the 1st Baltic Front.

Guards Tank Army. As a result, in the East Prussian direction, by the beginning of the operation, there were (taking into account the forces of the 43rd Army of the 1st Baltic Front) 14 combined arms, tank and 2 air armies, 4 tank, mechanized and cavalry separate corps. Such a concentration of forces and means, as follows from the data reflected in the table, ensured a general superiority over the enemy and allowed the Red Army to carry out

operation with decisive goals. **Table.**

Composition and aspect ratio to the beginning
East Prussian operation (5)

From the assessment of the situation by Marshal A. Vasilevsky: In November 1944, the General Staff and the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command were developing a plan for 1945. It was obvious that the East Prussian grouping of the Nazis had to be defeated in the first place, because this freed the armies of the 2nd Belorussian Front for operations in the main direction and removed the threat of a flank attack from East Prussia against the Soviet troops that had broken through in this direction. According to the plan, the overall goal of the operation was to cut off the armies of the Center group defending in East Prussia from the rest of the fascist forces, press them to the sea, dismember and destroy them in parts, completely clearing the territory of East Prussia and Northern Poland from the enemy. The success of such an operation from a strategic point of view was exceptionally important and was important not only for the general offensive of the Soviet troops in the winter of 1945, but also for the outcome

of the Great

Patriotic War as a whole. A. A. Luchinsky First, the troops of the 3rd and 2nd Belorussian Fronts were to cut off the East Prussian grouping of the enemy from its main forces and press it to the sea with coordinated concentric strikes. Then the troops of the 3rd Belorussian and 1st Baltic fronts were supposed to surround the enemy troops and destroy them piece by piece. It was assumed that during the operation the 2nd Belorussian Front, in close cooperation with the 1st Belorussian Front, would be redirected for operations in the main direction - through Eastern Pomerania to Stettin. In accordance with the calculations made by the General Staff, the operation was to begin in mid-January 1945" (6). Front commanders, given the availability of trained

defensive fortifications on the front line of the enemy, concentrated forces and means in narrow sections of the breakthrough, which amounted to 14% in the 3rd Belorussian Front, and about 10% of the total width of the offensive zone in the 2nd Belorussian Front. As a result of the regrouping of troops and their massing, about 60% of rifle formations, 77-80% of guns and mortars, 80-89% of tanks and self-propelled artillery installations were concentrated in the breakthrough areas. Such a concentration of troops, armaments and military equipment ensured the conduct of offensive operations linked by unity of purpose and coordinated in time. Each front was to deliver a strong blow to one of the flanks of Army Group Center. P. G. Shafranov, the 3rd Belorussian Front was ordered to defeat the Tilsit-Insterburg grouping and, no later than the 10-12th day of the operation, capture the border at a depth of 70-80 km. In the future, firmly

providing the main grouping from the south, the troops of the front were to develop an offensive on Koenigsberg along both banks of the Pregel River,

having the main strength

on its left bank (7). P. G. Chanchibadze The

2nd Belorussian Front received the task of defeating the enemy's Pshasnysh-Mlavsky grouping and, no later than the 10-11th day of the offensive, seize the line at a depth of 85-90 km, further advancing in the direction of Marienburg. To assist the 1st Belorussian Front in defeating the enemy's Warsaw grouping, the 2nd Belorussian Front was ordered to strike from the west, bypassing Modlin, in order to prevent the enemy from retreating beyond the Vistula and to be in readiness to cross the river west of Modlin (8). The 1st Baltic Front was to advance along the left bank of the Neman with the forces of the 43rd Army and thereby assist the 3rd Belorussian Front in defeating the Tilsit enemy grouping (9). The Red Banner Baltic Fleet was supposed to disrupt the maritime communications of the Nazi Germans by active operations of bomber aircraft, submarines and torpedo boats

troops from the Gulf of Riga to the Pomeranian Bay, and with air strikes, naval and coastal artillery fire, landings on the coastal flanks of the enemy to assist the ground forces advancing along the coast. Military actions to defeat

the East

Prussian grouping were of a long and fierce nature. The troops of the 3rd Belorussian

Front were the first to

go on the offensive on January 13. Despite careful preparation, it was not possible to completely keep an event of such a large scale secret. The enemy, who became aware of the time of the front's offensive, on the night of January 13, hoping to prevent the planned development of further events, began heavy artillery shelling of the combat formations of the front's shock group. However, the artillery of the enemy was soon suppressed by retaliatory strikes by artillery and night bombers. As a result, the enemy was unable to prevent the troops of the front from taking their initial positions and going over to the offensive according to the plan. At 6 p.m., the operations of the advanced battalions began. Breaking into the front line, they found that the first trench was occupied by only insignificant forces, the rest were diverted to the second and third trenches. This made it possible to make some

adjustments to the artillery preparation plan, which lasted from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. Since there was thick fog over the battlefield, and the sky was covered with low clouds, the planes could not take off from the airfields. The entire burden of suppressing enemy defenses fell on the artillery.

After artillery preparation, the infantry and tanks, supported by artillery fire, went over to the attack. The Nazis everywhere put up fierce resistance. In conditions of poor visibility, they let tanks approach at close range, and then widely used faustpatrons, anti-tank artillery and assault guns. Overcoming the stubborn resistance of the enemy and repelling his continuous counterattacks, the formations of the 39th and 5th armies, commanded by Generals I. I. Lyudnikov and I. I. Krylov, by the end of the day wedged into the enemy defenses for 2-3 km. The 28th Army under the command of General A.A. advanced more successfully.

Luchinsky, advancing up to 7 km. The fascist German command, trying at all costs to delay the offensive of the Soviet troops, during the 13th and on the night of January 14, transferred two infantry divisions from the non-attacked sectors to the breakthrough site, and pulled up a tank division from the reserve. Separate points and knots of resistance changed hands several times. As a result of six days of

continuous, fierce fighting, the troops of the 3rd Belorussian Front broke through the enemy defenses north of Gumbinnen in a sector over 60 km and advanced up to 45 km in depth. During the offensive, the Soviet troops inflicted a heavy defeat on the 3rd tank army of the enemy and created the conditions for a strike on Koenigsberg. On January 14, the 2nd

Belorussian Front went on the offensive from bridgeheads on the Narew River, north of Warsaw. At 10 o'clock artillery preparation began. For 15 minutes, artillery fired with maximum tension along the front line and the nearest depth of the enemy's defense, destroying his defensive structures and causing damage to manpower and equipment. The forward battalions of the divisions of the first echelon, deployed on the Ruzhany bridgehead, vigorously attacked the front line of the enemy's defense and broke into the first trench. Developing their success in depth, by 11 o'clock they captured the second and partially third trenches, which made it possible to reduce artillery preparation, and to begin the period of artillery support for the attack with a double barrage to the entire depth of the second position. As a result of stubborn

battles, the troops of the front broke through the tactical defense zone of the enemy in a 60-kilometer sector in three days and advanced to a depth of up to 30 km. They cut the railway line Ciechanow - Modlin. The tactical and immediate operational reserves of the Nazis were destroyed. In the current situation, a strong blow was required to finally break the resistance of the enemy. The front commander decided to bring a mobile group into battle. In the second half of January 17, the 5th Guards Tank

Army under the command of General V.T. Volsky entered the gap in the 48th Army's zone. To ensure its operations, the front aviation intensified its strikes and in four hours made 1,000 sorties. During the introduction of the army into the breakthrough, the enemy tried to launch counterattacks

tank and two motorized divisions on the flanks of the shock group of the front. But these attempts were thwarted by the energetic actions of the Soviet troops. The 8th Guards Tank Corps, with a surprise attack, together with the aviation supporting it, defeated the enemy tank division in the area of \u200b\u200bits concentration and captured the Ciechanow station. The motorized division "Grossdeutschland" came under attack from the formations of the 48th and 3rd armies and suffered heavy losses. The 18th motorized division, advancing to the Mlawa region, did not have time to take part in the implementation of the plan. Developing the offensive, the 5th Guards Tank Army broke away from the combined arms armies and reached the Mlavsky fortified

area by the end of the day. K. A
Galitsky

Following the tank formations, the combined arms armies also successfully advanced. Soviet soldiers, showing great enthusiasm, bravery and courage, overcame several positions of the Mlavsky fortified area and on January 17-18 captured several strongholds by storm. At this time, the 49th Army under the command of General I.T. Grishin was persistently advancing northward, securing the right flank of the strike force. The armies operating from the Serock bridgehead captured Modlin. V. T. Volsky After stubborn five-day battles, the 2nd Belorussian Front broke

through the

enemy defenses in a 110 km wide zone and advanced up to 60 km in depth in the Mlava direction. Before the troops of the front, real opportunities opened up in a short time to reach the Baltic Sea and cut off the East Prussian grouping of the enemy from the central regions of Germany. Developing the offensive, the 5th Guards Tank Army and the 3rd Guards Cavalry Corps, with the assistance of the front's aviation, which made 1820 sorties per day, crossed the border of East Prussia on January 19. Combined-arms armies operated successfully. During the 6 days of the offensive, they reached the line, which, according to the plan, they had to master on the 10-11th day of the operation. The fascist German troops, despite the threat of encirclement, continued to stubbornly defend themselves in the region of the Masurian Lakes.

Taking this into account, the commander of the 2nd Belorussian Front decided to turn the main forces of the front to the north and deliver the main blow not to Marienburg, as originally planned, but to Elbing, in order to reach the Frisch-Haf Bay by the shortest route and cut off the East Prussian grouping, but part of the forces reach the Vistula River on a broad front and thereby ensure the offensive of the main forces from the west.

Fulfilling the order of the front commander, the troops rushed to the coast of the Baltic Sea. Their rapid advance in the Elbing direction, as well as the offensive of the troops of the 3rd Belorussian Front in the direction of Koenigsberg, forced the fascist German command to begin on the night of January 22 with the withdrawal of their troops from the Masurian Lakes region. However, it was already too late. The forward detachments of the 5th Guards Tank Army were at that time on the outskirts of the Frisch-Gaff Bay.

T. T. Khryukin

January 23 at 21 o'clock the 3rd tank battalion - the vanguard of the 31st tank brigade of the tank corps under the command of Captain G. L. Dyachenko - went to the outskirts of the city of Elbing. The advance of the tanks was so rapid that the garrison of the city did not expect their appearance. Elbing lived the usual life of a rear city - the lights were on, the

trams were moving. Tanks burst into the city at high speed with headlights on, crushed a column of soldiers with fire and caterpillars and, without losing a single tank, rushed to the sea and reached the coast of the bay. Unfortunately, the main forces of the 31st Tank Brigade did not take advantage of the advance detachment's success in a timely manner, lagged behind it, and, when they approached Elbing, met the resistance of the enemy who came to his senses. Soon the main forces of the 29th Panzer Corps approached the city. Having blocked the city with part of the forces, the main forces of the corps bypassed it and on January 24 also reached the bay. Moving along the coast, units of the 5th Guards Tank Army, in cooperation with the approaching units of the 42nd Rifle Corps of the 48th Army, captured the city of Tolkemit on January 26. The encirclement of the East Prussian grouping of the enemy was completed.

On this occasion, the order of the Supreme Commander commander of the troops

2nd Belorussian Front Marshal of the Soviet Union
Rokossovsky and the chief of staff
of the front, Lieutenant-General Bogolyubov,
said: "The troops of the 2nd Belorussian Front, continuing their
rapid offensive, today, January 26, captured the cities of East Prussia,
Mühlhausen, Marienburg and Sttun, important strongholds of the
German defense and, breaking through to the coast of the Danzig Bay ,
occupied the city of Tolkemit, thereby cutting off the East Prussian
grouping of Germans

from the central regions of Germany _

"Thus, as a result of the withdrawal of troops of the 2nd Belorussian
Front to the Frisch-Gaff Bay and bypassing Koenigsberg by the troops
of the 3rd Belorussian Front from the northwest and the south, the
troops of the East Prussian grouping of the enemy, who survived the
defeat, were surrounded and divided into three parts: four divisions
were pressed to the sea on the Zemland Peninsula, about five divisions
and a large number of special units and subunits were cut off from the
main forces and blocked in Koenigsberg, and Finally, the main forces of
the enemy grouping in the amount of up to twenty divisions were
surrounded in the area southwest of Koenigsberg. All attempts by this
group of Nazi troops at the end of January to break out of the
encirclement in a westerly direction to the

Vistula were repulsed by the troops
of the 2nd

Belorussian Front. KK Rokossovsky The destruction of the enemy
was carried out sequentially, starting with a stronger group of troops
surrounded southwest of Koenigsberg. This group of troops relied on
the Helsberg fortified area and had a large number of artillery and tanks.
From February 9, the liquidation of the encircled enemy grouping in
East Prussia was entrusted to the troops of the 3rd Belorussian Front,
and from February 12 to the troops of the 1st Baltic Front, which
included the 43rd, 39th and 11th Guards armies. The 2nd Belorussian
Front received the task of developing the offensive in Eastern Pomerania.
With this task, as follows from the documents, his troops coped
successfully, providing significant support to their right neighbor.

From the order of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief to the commander of the TROOPS of the 2nd Belorussian Front Marshal of the Soviet Union Rokossovsky and the chief of staff of the front, Lieutenant General Bogolyubov communications and a powerful stronghold of the German defense on the right bank of the Vistula, covering the approaches to the Danzig Bay". From the order of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief to the commander of the troops of the 2nd Belorussian Front, Marshal of the Soviet Union Rokossovsky and the chief of staff of the front, Colonel-General Bogolyubov, "The troops of the 2nd Belorussian

Front after a two-week siege and stubborn battles completed the defeat of the encircled enemy grouping and today, March 6, they captured the city and fortress of Grudziadz (Graudenz) - a mossy knot of German defense on the lower reaches of

the Vistula River. During the fighting in Grudziadz, the troops of the front captured more than 5,000 German soldiers and officers led by the commandant of the fortress, Major General Frikke and his staff, and also seized a large amount of weapons and military equipment.

Marshal A. I. Vasilevsky tells about the events of those days: "The liquidation of the Helsenberg group took place in extremely difficult conditions. On the night of February 18, the Supreme Commander, after my report on the state of affairs in East Prussia, recommended that I go there to assist the troops and command

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The conversation took place at night. And on the afternoon of February 18, news came that Army General Ivan Danilovich Chernyakhovsky had been mortally wounded near the town of Melzak. I experienced the loss of Ivan Danilovich very hard. I knew him closely and well, appreciated in him an excellent commander, the boundless honesty of a communist, and the exceptional soul of a man. Our first acquaintance took place in January 1943, during the preparation and conduct of the Voronezh-Kastorno operation. I. D. Chernyakhovsky then commanded the 60th Army. Having started rather timidly his first offensive army operation, and in extremely adverse weather

conditions, he, quickly mastering himself and taking the army into his hands, brilliantly completed the task, liberating Voronezh on the very first day. An even more brilliant result of the operational leadership on the part of the young army commander was the military operations of his army during the capture of Kursk: the city was taken within a day.

The common work in Belarus brought Ivan Danilovich and me especially closer. It proceeded in an atmosphere of mutual trust, respect and desire to help each other. Chernyakhovsky led one of the leading fronts - the 3rd Belorussian. That was the first front-line operation, which was carried out by the youngest in the Red Army, an exceptionally talented and energetic front commander.

A good knowledge of the troops, diverse and complex military equipment, skillful use of the experience of others, deep theoretical knowledge allowed Chernyakhovsky to perfectly manage the troops that were part of his front, to solve the most difficult tasks that the Supreme High Command set for him. In battle, Chernyakhovsky was in the most critical areas, closely monitoring the actions of his troops and the enemy. He sensitively listened to the opinion of his subordinates. He boldly used everything new and useful in training troops and organizing combat. Soldiers, officers and generals loved their commander, first of all, for his humanity and concern for them, for courage and fearlessness, for firmness and perseverance in implementing decisions, for directness and ease of handling, for humanity and endurance, for demanding of himself and of subordinates. Yes, he was strict and demanding. But I never allowed myself to humiliate a person's dignity. On the evening of February 19, before leaving for the

front, I visited the Supreme Commander-in-Chief. He gave me a number of tips and instructions regarding the work ahead. Saying goodbye, he wished to think about how best to organize command and control of the troops_ "(10)

On February 21, the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command, taking into account the recommendations of Marshal A.M. Vasilevsky, decided to transfer the troops operating in East Prussia to the 3rd Belorussian Front, making it responsible for the elimination of all enemy formations located there. In accordance with this decision, the 1st Baltic Front was abolished from 24:00 on February 24, 1945, and its troops, renamed the Zemland Group, were included in the

3rd Belorussian Front. Army General I. Kh. Bagramyan was appointed commander of the Zemland Group of Forces and at the same time deputy commander of the 3rd Belorussian Front. Chief of Staff of the 1st Baltic Front, Colonel General V.

V. Kurasov became the chief of staff of the Zemland group, a member of the Military Council of the front, Lieutenant General M. V. Rudakov, respectively, a member of the Military Council of this group of troops. Thus, the united 3rd Belorussian Front included the 2nd and 11th guards, 43rd, 39th, 5th, 50th, 31st, 28th, 3rd and 48th combined arms armies, 1st and 3rd

air armies. Tense fighting continued until the end of February. Hitler's troops and with them detachments of the SD (security service under the Fuhrer), SA (stormtroopers), SS FT (military groups of guards), youth sports groups "Strength through Joy", FS (voluntary guards), units of the NSNKK (fascist motorized groups), ZIPO (security police) and SFG (secret field police) resisted fiercely. In view of the beginning of the

thaw, and also based on the need to solve logistical problems, the offensive of the front was temporarily suspended. I. Kh. Bagramyan It resumed on March 13 after a 40-

minute artillery

preparation. Impenetrable mud made it extremely difficult for military operations of formations and off-road movement of wheeled vehicles, artillery systems, and even tanks. And yet, despite the stubborn resistance of the enemy, the troops of the front broke through his defenses in the main directions and persistently moved forward. Fog and constant rain made it difficult at first to use aviation. Only on March 18, when the weather cleared up a little, the 1st and 3rd air armies were able to actively support the attackers. On this day alone, 2,520 sorties were made in the bands mainly of the 5th, 28th and 3rd armies (11). I. V. Boldin In the following days, the air armies not only supported the troops

together with

part of the long-range aviation and fleet forces, but also destroyed enemy transports and other means in the Frisches Haff Bay, Danzig Bay and ports. For six days

offensive troops of the 3rd Belorussian Front advanced 15-20 km, reducing the bridgehead of enemy troops to 30 km along the front and from 7 to 10 km in depth. The enemy found himself on a narrow coastal strip, shot through by artillery fire to the full depth. On March 20, the fascist German command decided to evacuate the troops of the 4th Army by sea to the Pillau region, but the Soviet troops intensified their strikes and disrupted these calculations. Terrible orders and emergency measures to hold a bridgehead in East Prussia were in vain. On March 25, the city of Heiligenbal, the last stronghold of the enemy on the coast of Frisch Gaff, capitulated. Soldiers and officers of the Wehrmacht on March 26 began to lay down their arms. The remnants of the Heilsberg group on the Balga Peninsula were finally liquidated on March 29. Only a few units managed, with the help of improvised means, to cross over to the Frische-Nerung spit, from where they were transferred to reinforce the Zemland task force. The entire southern coast of the Frisches Huff Bay became controlled by the troops of the 3rd Belorussian Front. Consequently, for 48 days (from February 10 to March 29) the struggle against

the Heilsberg grouping of the enemy continued. During this time, the troops of the 3rd Belorussian Front destroyed 220 thousand and captured about 60 thousand soldiers and officers, captured 650 tanks and assault guns, up to 5600 guns and mortars, over 8 thousand machine guns, more than 37 thousand

cars, 128 aircraft (12). Great

merit in the destruction of enemy troops and equipment on the battlefield, and especially watercraft in the Frisch-Haff Bay, the Danzig Bay and the Pillau naval base, belonged to aviation. During the most intense period of the operation, from March 13 to March 27, the 1st and 3rd Air Armies made more than 20,000 sorties, 4,590 of them at night. When the enemy was destroyed in the area southwest of Königsberg, torpedo boats, submarines and aviation of the Red Banner Baltic Fleet attacked transports and F. P. Ozerov. Thus, as a result

of fierce

battles, the most powerful, consisting of three isolated units, Army Group "North" ceased to exist. During the struggle, Soviet troops combined various techniques and methods of destroying the enemy:

cutting off his troops in the ledges of the bridgehead, the consistent compression of the encirclement front with the massive use of artillery, as well as blockade operations, as a result of which aviation and fleet forces made it difficult for the enemy to supply and evacuate troops surrounded from land. After the liquidation of the enemy in the Heilsberg fortified area, the front command was able to release and regroup part of the forces and means near Koenigsberg, where another offensive operation was being prepared. With the destruction of the German - fascist troops southwest of Koenigsberg, the situation on the right wing of the Soviet-German front improved significantly. In this regard, the Headquarters of the Supreme Command took a number of measures. On April 1, the 2nd Baltic Front was disbanded, part of its troops (4th shock, 22nd army and 19th tank ^ 1st corps) were put into reserve, and the front administration and the remaining formations were reassigned to the Leningrad Front. The 50th, 2nd Guards and 5th Armies of the 3rd Belorussian Front were regrouped on the Zemland Peninsula to participate in the upcoming assault on Koenigsberg, and the 31st, 28th and 3rd Armies were withdrawn to the reserve of the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command. Some organizational changes were also made in command and control. On April 3, the Headquarters of the Supreme Command put the administration and headquarters of the Zemland Group of Soviet Forces into reserve, and subordinated the forces and means to the command of the 3rd Belorussian Front.

General I. Kh. Bagramyan was initially left as a deputy, and at the end of April he was appointed commander of the front. The front received the task of defeating the Koenigsberg grouping and capturing the Koenigsberg fortress, and then clearing the entire Zemland Peninsula with the fortress and the Pillau naval base. Soviet troops operating against the fascist

German armies in Courland were ordered to go over to a tough defense, and in the main directions to keep strong reserves in combat readiness, so that when the enemy defenses were weakened, they would immediately go on the offensive. In order to reveal the enemy's regroupings and his possible retreat, they had to conduct continuous reconnaissance and, by means of fire, keep him in constant tension. They were also entrusted with the task of preparing for an offensive in order to elimin

exclude the possibility of strengthening the Nazi troops at the expense of the Courland

groups in other directions. Assault on
Koenigsberg By the

beginning of April, the enemy grouping on the Samland Peninsula and in the fortress of Koenigsberg still posed a serious threat, as it relied on powerful defenses. Koenigsberg, which had been turned into a strong fortress long before the Second World War, was included in the Heilsberg fortified area. The entry of Soviet troops into the borders of East Prussia in October 1944 forced the Nazis to strengthen the defense of the city. It was singled out as an independent object of defense, the border of which passed along the outer contour of the fortress. With the approach of the front to Konigsberg, the most important enterprises of the city and other military facilities were intensively buried in the ground. Field-type fortifications were erected in the fortress and on the approaches to it. They supplemented the long-term structures that existed here. In addition to the outer defensive bypass, which the Soviet troops partially overcame in the January battles, three defensive positions were prepared. The outer contour and the first position had two or three trenches with communication passages and shelters for personnel. 6-8 km east of the fortress, they merged into one defensive line (six to seven trenches with numerous communication passages throughout

15 km section). At this position, there were 15 old forts with artillery pieces, machine guns and flamethrowers, connected by a single fire system. Each fort was prepared for all-round

defense and was actually a fortress with a garrison of 250-300 people. Between the forts there were 60 pillboxes and bunkers (13). On the outskirts of the city passed the second position, which included stone buildings, barricades, reinforced concrete firing points. The third position encircled the central part of the city, having fortifications of the old construction. The cellars of large brick buildings were connected by underground passages, and their ventilation windows were adapted for loopholes. I. T. Grishin

The fortress garrison consisted of four infantry divisions, several separate regiments, fortress and security formations, as well as Volkssturm battalions. It numbered about 130 thousand people. It was armed with up to 4 thousand guns and mortars, 108 tanks and assault guns. From the air, this grouping was supported by 170 aircraft, which were based on the airfields of the Zemland Peninsula (14). The 5th Panzer Division was stationed to the west of the city. According to the plan of the commander of the front, the 39th, 43rd, 50th and 11th Guards armies, which had been in continuous heavy battles for more than two months, were supposed to participate in the assault on Koenigsberg. The average staffing of rifle divisions in the armies by the beginning of April did not exceed 35-40% of the regular strength. In total, about 5.2 thousand guns and mortars, 125 tanks and 413 self-propelled artillery installations (15) were involved in the offensive operation.

To support the troops from the air, the 1st, 3rd and 18th air armies, part of the aviation forces of the Red Banner Baltic Fleet, as well as the bomber corps from the 4th and 15th air armies,

were allocated. In total, there were 2.4 thousand combat aircraft (16). The actions of these aviation associations and formations were coordinated by the representative of the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command, Air Chief Marshal A. A. Novikov. Thus, the troops of the front outnumbered the enemy in artillery - 1.3 times, in tanks and self-propelled artillery installations - 5 times, and in aircraft the advantage was overwhelming.

The commander of the 3rd Belorussian Front decided to defeat the garrison of Koenigsberg by strikes from the 39th, 43rd and 50th armies from the north and the 11th guards army from

the south and capture the city by

the end of the third day of the operation (17). The operational formation of the front and armies was planned to be in one echelon. The battle formations of formations and units, as a rule, were built in two echelons. For operations in the city, assault groups and detachments were preparing in divisions. The specifics of the upcoming operation also affected the grouping of artillery. So, on the scale of the front, a front-line group of long-range artillery, an artillery blockade group of the Koenigsberg area and a

railway artillery of the Red Banner Baltic Fleet to influence communications and important objects behind enemy lines.

In the rifle corps, corps groups of destruction artillery were created, armed with 152-mm and 305-mm guns. A significant amount of artillery was allocated to support the combat operations of assault groups and detachments (18). In the armies in the breakthrough areas, the density of artillery ranged from 150 to 250 guns and mortars per 1 km, and the density of tanks of direct support - from 18 to 23 units. This amounted to 72% of barreled, almost 100% of rocket artillery and more than 80% of armored vehicles. In the interests of the armies of the strike force, front-line and attached

aviation was aimed. During the preparatory period, she was to make 5316 sorties, and on the first day of the offensive - 4124 sorties. It was envisaged that aviation would strike at defense facilities, artillery positions, places of concentration of manpower and military equipment, as well as at seaports and bases. The Red Banner Baltic Fleet also carefully prepared for the upcoming operation. Its aviation, submarines, torpedo boats, as well as armored boats transported to the Pregel River by rail, and the 1st Guards Naval Railway Artillery Brigade, equipped with 130 mm and 180 mm guns, were preparing to solve the problems of isolating the Koenigsberg garrison and prohibition of its evacuation by sea. I. I. Fedyuninsky Preparations for the assault on Koenigsberg began in March. It was carried out under

the direct supervision of the command and staff of the Zemland Group of Soviet Forces. To work out the issues of interaction with the commanders of divisions, regiments and battalions, a detailed model of the city and its defense system made by the headquarters of the group was used. According to him, the commanders studied the plan for the upcoming assault in their bands. Before the start of the offensive, all officers, up to and including the platoon commander, were given a city plan with a single numbering of quarters and the most important objects, which greatly facilitated command and control of troops during the battle. General I. Kh. Bagramyan says: "This time, perhaps the most difficult mission fell to the lot of the head of the engineering troops, General V. V. Kosyrev. After all, in overcoming such

the fortifications that were created around the city and in the city itself, the engineering troops were to play no less important role than aviation and artillery. Considerable forces were allocated: ten engineer-sapper, three assault engineer-sapper, two motorized engineering and one pontoon brigades. And this is not counting those full-time sapper units that were in the corps and divisions. A significant part of these forces had to be included in 26 assault detachments and 104 groups. The engineering troops had to do a gigantic job both during the preparation of the assault and during it. In addition to conducting a thorough engineering reconnaissance of the enemy's defense, it was necessary to prepare a lot of roads, bridges and column tracks, build a base for torpedo boats on the coast of the Zemland Peninsula, flyovers for launching armored boats delivered by rail to the Pregel River, select the initial bridgehead for troops intended for storm the city, overcome hundreds of passages in mine and wire obstacles under enemy fire. With the start of the assault, the engineering troops had to clear mines and restore paths for the advancement of tanks,

artillery and other types of military equipment, and then clear the streets of the city and build crossings across the Pregel River and numerous deep canals. And all this work was carefully planned and completed in a timely manner. An important role was also played by the chemical troops, the combat use of which was planned by Major General M.F. Doronin with his department. To ensure the assault, three chemical defense battalions, seven separate flamethrower battalions, a company of high-explosive flamethrowers and five separate companies of knapsack flamethrowers were allocated. Flamethrower units were distributed among assault squads and assault groups" (19). Direct assault on the fortress

was preceded by a four-day period of destruction of long-term enemy engineering structures. One day was spent on fire reconnaissance and identification of targets. On April 6, at 12 o'clock, after artillery preparation, the infantry and tanks, following the barrage of fire, moved to storm the fortifications. The enemy offered stubborn resistance. Furious counterattacks were made at the slightest advance

advancing. By the end of the day, the 43rd, 50th and 11th Guards Armies broke through the fortifications of the outer defenses of Koenigsberg, reached its outskirts and cleared a total of 102 quarters from enemy troops. Formations of the 39th Army, having broken through the outer defensive line, reached the railway to Pillau and cut it west of Koenigsberg. The fascist German command to the west of the fortress committed the 5th Panzer Division, separate infantry and anti-tank units into battle. Meteorological conditions ruled out the participation in combat operations of bomber aircraft and a significant part of attack aircraft. Therefore, the air army of the front, having made only 274 sorties in the first two hours of the assault, was unable to prevent the advancement and commissioning of enemy reserves.

On April 7, the armies, having reinforced the battle formations of formations with tanks, direct fire guns and anti-tank weapons, continued the offensive. Taking advantage of the clearing weather, aviation began intensive combat operations at dawn. After three front-line aviation strikes, 516 long-range bombers of the 18th Air Army made a massive raid on the fortress. Under the cover of 232 fighters, they destroyed fortress defenses, artillery firing positions and destroyed enemy troops. Repeated massive raids by naval aviation and

The Pillau base, where enemy warships and transports were located, was also subjected to the 4th Air Army. In just one day of the battle, Soviet aviation made 4,758 sorties, dropping 1,658 tons of bombs. Under

the cover of artillery and aviation, infantry and tanks, with assault detachments and groups in front, persistently made their way to the city center. During the assault, they captured another 130 quarters, three forts, a marshalling yard and several industrial enterprises. The ferocity of the fighting did not abate with the onset of darkness. At night alone, Soviet pilots made 1,800 sorties, destroying many firing points and enemy units.

VS Popov

From the morning of April 8, the troops of the 3rd Belorussian Front continued to storm the fortifications of the city. Supported by aviation and artillery

they broke the enemy's resistance in the northwestern and southern parts of the fortress. The left-flank formations of the 11th Guards Army reached the Pregel River, crossed it on the move and connected with units of the 43rd Army advancing from the north. The garrison of Koenigsberg was surrounded and dismembered, command and control of troops was disrupted. On that day alone, 15,000 people were taken prisoner. Soviet air strikes reached their maximum force. In just the third day of the assault, 6,077 sorties were made, of which 1,818 were at night. Soviet pilots dropped 2,100 tons of bombs of various calibers on the fortifications and enemy troops in the area of Koenigsberg and Pillau. An attempt by the Nazi command to organize a breakthrough of the encirclement front by strikes from within and from without failed. On April 9, the fighting unfolded with renewed vigor. The German fascist troops were again attacked by artillery and aircraft. It became clear to many soldiers of the garrison that resistance was pointless. "The tactical situation in Koenigsberg," General O. Lash, the commandant of the fortress, recalled this day, "was hopeless." General

I. Kh. Bagramyan

says: By the evening of April 9, the entire northwestern, western and southern parts of Koenigsberg were in our hands. The enemy continued to use his last strength to hold only the very center and eastern part of the city.

Finally, the commandant of Koenigsberg made the first reasonable decision in the last two days of fighting. He sent truce envoys to us with a message about the cessation of further resistance. At 18:30, General K.N. Galitsky reported to Marshal A.M. Vasilevsky about the arrival of representatives of the commandant Colonel Khevke and Lieutenant Colonel Kervin at the headquarters of the 11th Guards Rifle Division. A. M. Vasilevsky ordered to send our representatives with them to the headquarters of General O. Lash to accept the surrender.

The chief of staff of the 11th Guards Rifle Division, Lieutenant Colonel P.G. Yanovsky, captains V.M. With danger to their lives, they made their way to the former University Square along the littered with debris, lined with equipment and

mined streets. At 9:30 p.m., General O. Lash was given an ultimatum by the Soviet command, and after some hesitation, he signed a written order to his troops to stop

resistance. At

dawn, the first columns of prisoners were drawn from the city center. Returning to the command post of the front, I found a group of fascist generals there, led by the tall and thin commandant of the fallen Koenigsberg, Otto O. Lasch. Depressed by the fall of an impregnable, in their opinion, fortress, so unexpected for them, they gloomily expected a meeting with A. M. Vasilevsky, who expressed a desire to interrogate the leaders of the fascist defense. When I entered the office of the Front Commander, Air Chief Marshal A. A. Novikov, Generals V. E. Makarov, A. P. Pokrovsky and others were already there. Marshal of the Soviet Union A. M. Vasilevsky exchanged impressions with them about the course of the assault on Koenigsberg. I joined the conversation with pleasure and heard with admiration from the lips of the chief of staff of the front about the results of our victory. And the results were quite impressive. 42 thousand enemy soldiers and officers

were destroyed, almost 92 thousand were captured, including 4 generals, more than 1800 officers. Among the trophies, there were over 2000 guns, 1.5 thousand mortars, 128 aircraft. On the battlefield, 104 tanks and assault guns, 82 armored personnel carriers, 1,719 vehicles remained knocked out" (20). Order of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief to the commander of the troops of the 3rd

Belorussian Front, Marshal of the Soviet Union Vasilevsky, Chief of Staff of the Front, Colonel-General Pokrovsky "The troops of the 3rd Belorussian Front, after stubborn street fighting, completed the defeat of the

Koenigsberg group of German troops and today, April 9, stormed the fortress and the main city East Prussia Koenigsberg - a strategically important center of defense of the Germans in the Baltic Sea.

During the day of fighting, by 20:00, the troops of the front had captured over 27,000 German soldiers and officers, and also captured a large amount of weapons and various military equipment. The remnants of the Königsberg garrison, led by the commandant of the fortress, General of Infantry Lyash, and his headquarters today at 21:30 stopped resistance and laid down their arms^

Moscow celebrated the feat of heroes with festive fireworks. 97 units and formations that directly stormed the main city of East Prussia were given the honorary name of Königsberg. All participants in the assault were awarded the medal "For the Capture of Königsberg", established by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in honor of this victory. After the loss of Königsberg, the Nazi command was still trying to keep the Samland Peninsula. By April 13, eight infantry and tank divisions were defending here, as well as several separate regiments and battalions of the Volkssturm, which were part of the Zemland task force, which included about 65 thousand people, 1.2 thousand guns, 166 tanks and assault guns '(21). From the appeal of the Soviet command to

the command of the Samland grouping “_You are well aware that the entire German army suffered a complete defeat ^ Russians near Berlin and Vienna. Allied troops - 300 km east of the Rhine. The Allies - already in Bremen, Hannover, Braunschweig, approached Leipzig and Munich. Half of Germany is in the hands of Russian and allied troops. One of the strongest German fortresses, Königsberg, fell in three days. The commandant of the fortress, General of the Infantry Lash, accepted the terms of surrender offered by me and surrendered with most of the garrison. In total, 92,000 German soldiers, 1819 officers and 4 generals surrendered ^

German officers and soldiers left on Zemland! Now, after Königsberg, the last stronghold of German troops in East Prussia, your situation is completely hopeless. No one will help you. 450 km separate you from the front line near Stettin. Sea routes to the west are cut by Russian submarines. You are in the deep rear of the Russian troops. Your position is hopeless. Against you are the many times superior forces of the Red Army. The force is on our side, and your resistance does not make any sense. It will only lead to your death and

numerous victims among the civilian population that has accumulated in the Pillau area ... K.

A. Vershinin To avoid unnecessary

bloodshed, I demand

from you: within 24 hours, lay down your arms, stop resisting and surrender. All generals, officers and soldiers who cease resistance are guaranteed life, adequate food and return to their homeland after the war. All the wounded and sick will be immediately provided with medical assistance. I promise that all who surrender will be treated like soldiers. If my demand for surrender is not met within 24 hours, you risk being destroyed. German officers and soldiers! If your command does not accept my ultimatum, act on your own. Save your life, surrender." The term granted by A. M. Vasilevsky to the enemy expired at midnight on April 12, Moscow time. We waited one day and two nights, writes I. Kh. Bagramyan, that the fascists blockaded on the peninsula would come to their senses. On the morning of April 13, A. M.

Vasilevsky gave the order: "Attack and destroy adversary."

To eliminate enemy troops on the peninsula, the command of the 3rd Belorussian Front allocated the 2nd and 11th guards, 5th, 39th, 43rd armies. More than 111 thousand soldiers and officers, 5.2 thousand guns and mortars, 451 rocket artillery installations, 324 tanks and self-propelled artillery installations were involved in the operation. The main blow in the direction of Fischhausen was to be delivered by the 5th and 39th armies in order to cut the enemy troops into the northern and southern parts and subsequently destroy them by the joint efforts of all armies. To provide a strike force from the flanks, the 2nd Guards and 43rd Armies were preparing for an offensive along the northern and southern coasts of the Zemland Peninsula, the 11th Guards Army was the second echelon. The Red Banner Baltic Fleet received the task of securing the coastal flank of the 2nd Guards Army from possible enemy shelling and landings from the sea, with naval and coastal artillery fire from A.P. Beloborodoe

On the night before the offensive, the 1st and 3rd air armies delivered a series of massive strikes against the battle formations of the enemy troops, defensive structures, ports and communication centers. On the morning of April 13, after an hour of artillery preparation, the troops

The 3rd Belorussian Front, with the support of aviation, went on the offensive. The enemy, relying on a system of field engineering structures, offered unusually stubborn resistance. Numerous counterattacks by his infantry were supported not only by field artillery fire, but also by artillery from surface ships and self-propelled landing barges. N. F. Pipivnin

Slowly, but steadily, the
Soviet troops

advanced westward. Despite the strong and continuous combat support of aviation, which made 6111 sorties on the first day of the operation, the main strike force managed to advance only 3-5 km. Heavy fighting continued into the next day. Especially

stubborn was the resistance of the enemy in front of the center and the left wing of the front. However, fearing dismemberment, the Nazi command from April 14 began to gradually withdraw its units to Pillau. Taking advantage of this, the Soviet troops attacked his positions along the entire front. The 2nd Guards Army achieved the greatest success. On April 15, its formations cleared the entire northwestern part of the Zemland Peninsula from the enemy and rushed along the eastern coast of the Baltic Sea to the south. By the end of the day, under the onslaught of Soviet troops, the defenses that blocked the path to the Pillau Spit collapsed. On the night of April 17, with a double blow from the north and east, formations of the 39th and 43rd armies captured the city and port of Fishhausen. The remnants of the enemy grouping (15-20 thousand people) retreated to the northern part of the Pillau Spit, where they entrenched themselves on a pre-prepared defensive line. The 2nd Guards Army, weakened in previous battles, was unable to break through its defenses on the move.

and stopped the attack. The

1st and 3rd air armies conducted combat operations with great tension, making about 5 thousand aircraft sorties daily. The forces of the fleet covered the coastal flank of the advancing troops, violated the evacuation of personnel and military equipment

enemy by sea, sank several ships and transports, landing barges and submarines. The front commander decided to bring the 11th Guards Army into battle. Replacing the troops of the 2nd Guards Army west of Fischhausen on the night of April 18, the formations of the 11th Guards Army conducted reconnaissance in force on the very first day, and on the morning of April 20, after artillery preparation, attacked the enemy. For six days there were battles on the outskirts of Pillau, one of the strongholds of East Prussia. The wooded area of the spit, in combination with engineering structures, increased the stability of the enemy's defense, and the small width of the land (2-5 km), which completely excluded maneuver, forced the attackers to carry out frontal attacks. Only by the end of April 24, the 11th

the guards army broke through a six-kilometer zone of defensive positions covering the approaches to Pillau from the north (22). On April 25, Soviet

troops broke into its outskirts. By evening, a red flag was raised over the city. The last knot of enemy resistance in the southwestern part of the Zemland Peninsula was eliminated. After the capture of Pillau, only the narrow

Frische-Nerung spit remained in the hands of the Nazis. The front commander entrusted the 11th Guards Army with the support of the forces of the South-Western Marine Defense Region with the task of forcing the strait and liquidating these troops. On the night of April 26, advanced formations of the army, under the cover of artillery and aviation fire, crossed the strait. At the same time, the rifle regiment of the 83rd Guards Rifle Division of the 11th Guards Army, the consolidated regiment of the 43rd Army, together with the regiment of the 260th Marine Brigade, were landed by the fleet on the western and eastern coasts of the Frische-Nerung Spit. Together they captured the northern part of the spit. The formations of the army entrenched themselves at the reached line. In the center and in the southern part of the Frische-Nerung spit, as well as at the mouth of the Vistula River, the remnants of the once strong East Prussian group offered stubborn resistance. On May 9, more than 22,000 enemy soldiers

and officers laid down their arms.

The defeat of the enemy on the Zemland Peninsula was the finale of the entire East Prussian operation, as a result of which

42 enemy divisions

were destroyed and defeated. A

positive role in the development of events in East Prussia was played by the military operations of the Soviet troops in Courland. The fighting formations of the 1st and 2nd Baltic, and then the Leningrad fronts for a long time fettered a large enemy

grouping here. At the cost of great

effort, they successively broke open the enemy's defenses in depth, destroyed his manpower and equipment, and prevented the transfer of his formations to other sectors of the Soviet-German front. Courland grouping of Nazi troops on

May 8, 1945. In January - February, the main hostilities were carried out in

the Tukums and Liepaja directions. Having lost hope of uniting the Courland and East Prussian groupings, the enemy during this period began the transfer of a number of divisions from Courland. To prevent this, the 2nd Baltic Front (commander - General A.I. Eremenko, chief of staff - General L.M. Sandalov) carried out an offensive operation. Initially, on February 16, an auxiliary strike was delivered on its right wing by the forces of the 1st

Shock Army under the command of General V.N. Razuvaev and partly of the 22nd Army of General G.P. Korotkov. The formations of these armies successfully coped with the task of preventing the transfer of enemy units to the Saldus and Liepaja directions. Then, on February 20, the main grouping of the front, consisting of the 6th Guards Army of General I.M. Chistyakov and part of the forces of the 51st Army under the command of General Ya.G. Kreizer, went on the offensive. The blow was struck in the direction of Liepaja with the immediate task of eliminating the enemy in the Priekule region - a large center of resistance in the Liepaja direction - and capturing the line of the Vartava River. Only by bringing two infantry divisions into battle did the enemy manage on February 22 to temporarily delay the advancing units of the 6th Guards and

51st Army. However, on the morning of the next day, after a partial regrouping, these armies resumed the offensive and captured Priekule, and by the end of February 28 they reached the Vartava River. In March, in

In the conditions of spring thaw, when the troops experienced great difficulties with the delivery and evacuation, the fighting on the outskirts of Liepaja and in other areas did not stop. On March 17, in the general direction of Saldus, the 10th Guards and 42nd Armies went on the offensive under the command of Generals M.I. Kazakov and V.P. Sviridov. The 42nd Army included the 130th Latvian and 8th Estonian rifle corps. Due to bad weather, the troops did not have air support, but, despite this, the Soviet soldiers stubbornly moved forward. Particularly heavy were the battles for the Blidene railway station, which was taken on March 19 by forces of the 130th Latvian and 8th Estonian rifle corps. In accordance with the terms of

surrender on May 8, at 11 p.m.,

the fascist German armies blockaded on the Courland Peninsula ceased resistance. The troops of the Leningrad Front disarmed and captured almost 200,000 enemy groupings.

The Soviet soldiers successfully solved the important task of the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command in fettering the Army Group ^Kurland^. For more than five months, they, continuously conducting active operations, inflicted significant losses on the enemy and prevented the transfer of divisions to other sectors of the Soviet German front, primarily to East Prussia.

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Chapter 5 On the approaches to the capital of Austria

The Red Army, after 195 days of heavy battles and fighting in Hungary, had to attack again without rest and without any operational pause. In late March - early April, Soviet troops moved the fighting to the eastern regions of Austria. This country was occupied by Germany without any resistance in March 1938. After that, by order of Berlin, an Austrian government was formed from the Nazis, who on the same day passed a law declaring Austria one of the lands of the German Reich. The most severe terror was launched against anti-fascists under the leadership of the Germans and Austrian fascists, carried out under the slogan "One people - one Reich - one Fuhrer." On April 10, 1938, a referendum was held in Austria, in which the population of this country virtually unanimously voted in favor of supporting the ideology of fascism and the policy pursued by A. Hitler. The Austrian armed forces joined the Wehrmacht, and the Austrians, along with the Germans, entered the Second World War in 1939, and in 1941 invaded the Soviet Union. Thus, the Soviet people, having risen to defend their Fatherland, did not see any differences between the Germans and the Austrians, who came to their land with fire and sword. Another was the attitude towards this issue of the top Soviet political leadership, which in every possible way sought to drive a "wedge"

into the union of the countries of the fascist bloc. Therefore, when the Soviet troops entered the territory of Austria, political agencies began to carry out propaganda of Austrian national values and in every possible way stood up for their preservation for future generations.

The fascist command considered this direction as one of the most powerful bases of its defense. To hold it, several defensive lines were prepared in advance. The first of them relied on a chain of cities turned into fortresses. The second is on mountain ranges. The third is on the rivers. Fourth - to Small

Carpathians, Bratislava, Lake Krezaidler See and the Loit Mountains. For defense in this sector, the South Army Group was concentrated as part of the 8th, 6th combined arms and 6th tank German, as well as the 3rd Hungarian armies. Ground forces were covered from the air

4th Air Fleet. Troops

of the 2nd and 3rd Ukrainian Fronts were assigned to carry out the Vienna Offensive. As part of the 2nd Ukrainian Front, the 7th Guards, 40th, 53rd, 46th armies, as well as the 4th and 1st Romanian armies operated. The mobile troops of this front included the 6th Guards Tank Army, two guards mechanized corps and a cavalry mechanized group. Air support for ground forces was provided by the 5th Air Army. On the right wing of the 3rd Ukrainian Front, the 9th and 4th Guards and 26th Armies, as well as two tank and mechanized corps, operated. Air support for ground forces was provided by the 17th Air Army. The Soviet troops advancing in the direction of Vienna outnumbered the opposing enemy in personnel by 3-4 times, in guns and mortars - by 5-7 times (1).

But with tanks and self-propelled guns, the picture was more complex. In the zone of the 3rd Ukrainian Front, where the enemy concentrated his 6th SS Panzer Army in the area of Lake Balaton, the ratio for them was approximately equal. But in the zone of the 2nd Ukrainian Front, Soviet troops outnumbered the enemy by more than 6 times in tanks and self-

propelled guns. Directly on Vienna along the southern bank of the Danube in a strip of up to 70 km along the front, the troops of the 46th Army of the 2nd Ukrainian Front (commander - Lieutenant General A.V. Petrushevsky) were to attack. According to the directive of the headquarters of this front of March 13, the army troops were faced with the task of breaking

through the enemy defenses, and then, advancing in two directions, pressing the surround and destroy it. In

front of the front of the 46th Army, the 3rd Hungarian Army was defending as part of the 8th Hungarian Army Corps, two German infantry divisions, the Fegelein cavalry division and other units. To the south of this army, the SS Panzer Division "Dead Head" was defending. The opposing enemy was inferior to the troops of the army in infantry by 1.8

times, for guns and mortars - 4.4 times, for tanks and self-propelled guns
- 6

times (2). In order to fulfill the assigned task, the commander of the 46th Army decided, inflicting the main blow on the left flank, to break through the enemy's defenses on a 14-kilometer sector on the first day of the operation, and then, having introduced a mobile group of the army into battle, cut off the escape routes of the Esztergom- Tovarosh grouping of the enemy, surround and destroy it in cooperation with the Danube military flotilla. The order to the army formations was given on March

14. The strike force, operating on a 14 km front, included three rifle divisions and a guards mechanized corps, whose forces were concentrated on a narrow section of the front. This made it possible to further increase the superiority of the Soviet troops in the chosen direction: 6-fold in infantry, 13-fold in artillery, absolute in tanks and self-propelled guns.

In the other direction, in a strip of more than 50 km along the front, there remained the forces of two army corps, which were supposed to use active actions only to tie down the enemy forces as much as possible. When encircling the enemy, the main hope was placed on mobile troops, who, following the rifle formations, after entering the breakthrough in mountainous wooded terrain and impassable roads, were to develop an offensive rate of up to 25 km per day. The troops of the 46th Army had to create on their own not only the internal, but also the external front of the encirclement of enemy troops, which was a new phenomenon in the preparation and conduct of an army operation (3).
The offensive

of the troops of the 46th Army began from reconnaissance in force at 15:30 on March 16. It was carried out by advanced battalions of rifle divisions, which broke through the front line of the enemy's defenses and, fighting fierce battles, advanced to a depth of 3 km by 19 o'clock. The next day, in

the morning, the main forces of the army went on the offensive; by the end of the day, their advanced regiments went deep into the enemy defenses up to 8 km. At the same time, the 1057th rifle regiment of the 297th rifle division, advancing on the left flank of the army, surrounded and destroyed up to two companies of the Fegelein division.

On March 18, in connection with the massive use of Soviet aviation and the introduction of reserves of rifle divisions into battle, the pace of the offensive of the army troops increased. By the end of the day, the enemy's main line of defense had been broken through. The 52nd Infantry Division crossed the Altal River and captured a bridgehead on its western bank. The average pace of the main

line of defense reached 1 km per hour (4). But the enemy was not going to give up and in the afternoon of March 18 he began to commit his reserves into battle, including units of the 6th SS Panzer Division. In this regard, the overall balance of forces in the offensive zone of the strike group of the 46th Army began to gradually change in favor of the enemy. In an effort to prevent this, the army commander decided to send a mobile group of the army into battle, which made it possible to complete the breakthrough of the enemy's second line of defense.

On the night of March 20, the commander of the 2nd Ukrainian Front clarified the task of the 46th Army, which was to complete the encirclement and defeat of the Esztergom-Tovarosh grouping of the enemy by the end of March 22, and part of the forces to develop an offensive in the direction of Vienna. To isolate the enemy from the north, it was supposed

to use the ships of the Danube River Flotilla of Rear Admiral G. N. Kholostyakov. On March 20, the 46th Army resumed the offensive. By the end of the same day, Soviet troops reached the Danube and the inner ring of

encirclement around the main enemy forces was closed. Its total length was 85 km. The outer front of the encirclement was necessary to prevent the deblockade of the encircled group by strikes from outside. To create it, two rifle divisions and two tank brigades were involved. These forces, occupying defensive lines, successfully repulsed several enemy counterattacks, after which they began to gradually expand the thickness of the encirclement. On the outer front, German units of the 2nd SS Panzer Division ^ Reich, 6th Panzer and 356th Infantry Divisions acted against the troops of the 46th Army, which made every effort to free the encircled

comrades. One counterattack followed another. As a result, the German 96th and 711th infantry divisions, the Hungarian 23rd infantry division, part of the forces of the Fegelein cavalry division and the 92nd motorized

brigade. The total number of personnel of these troops exceeded 20 thousand people. It was armed with more than 880 guns and mortars, there were 32 tanks and self-propelled guns (5).

The rout of the encircled grouping began immediately after the completion of its coverage without an operational pause. At 8 o'clock in the morning on March 21, after a 10-minute fire raid, the army formations went on the offensive on the inner front of the encirclement, trying to dismember the enemy grouping into parts. But the Nazis offered stubborn

resistance. The fighting on the inner front of the encirclement continued from 22 to 26 March. The encirclement was gradually shrinking. By the end of March 23, the enemy occupied an area measuring 14 km along the front and 9 km in depth. The encircled enemy, whose general command was taken by the commander of the 3rd Hungarian army, Colonel-General Gauser, desperately resisted, constantly counterattacking the Soviet troops. So, on March 24, 8 counterattacks were carried out with forces up to an infantry company with tanks, on March 25 - 6 counterattacks with forces up to an infantry battalion, supported by assault guns, on

March 26 - 2 more counterattacks supported by tanks and self-propelled guns. Soviet troops repulsed enemy counterattacks with the help of tanks and guns brought to direct fire. However, each counterattack had a negative effect on the pace of the advance of the 46th Army, which sometimes did not exceed 1-1.5 km per day. The losses of the Soviet troops v

The final attack to defeat the enemy pressed against the river began on the night of March 27. After a 10-minute fire raid, formations of the 10th Guards Rifle Corps went on the offensive and, having broken enemy resistance, reached the Danube in some directions. After that, the resistance of the enemy began to decline, and mass surrender began. The Esztergom-Tovarosh grouping of the enemy ceased to exist. Favorable conditions were created for the development of an offensive against Vienna.

Overcoming the stubborn resistance of the enemy, repelling his counterattacks, on April 6, advanced formations of the 2nd and 3rd Ukrainian fronts broke into the outskirts of the Austrian capital and started street fighting. The Nazis planned to organize a strong defense of Vienna, turning it into a fortress.

By this time, the Soviet command was already quite well versed in the mood of the inhabitants of the capital, in which they were promptly helped by one of the leaders of the Austrian Social Democratic Party and the 2nd International, 75-year-old Karl Renner. Stalin remembered him. When the Soviet troops were approaching the borders of Austria, the General Staff was tasked to find out about his place of residence. K. Renner himself also sought a meeting

with the Soviet command and on April 4 appeared at the headquarters of the 103rd Guards Rifle Division. In a conversation with representatives of the Soviet command, K. Renner expressed the opinion that nine-tenths of the population of Vienna were opposed to the Nazis, but the fascist repressions and the Anglo-American bombing frightened the Viennese: they feel depressed and are not capable of active action. Nobody took any organized measures to mobilize the population to fight against the Nazis. Therefore, the Soviet leadership had no reason to hope that the population of Vienna, with the approach of Soviet troops, would raise an uprising against the Nazis. The meeting with K. Renner was reported

to Stalin, who considered it necessary to give the old Social Democrat confidence and support in order to restore the democratic regime in Austria. It was with the blessing of the Soviet government that K. Renner soon became the head of the Provisional Government, and then the President of Austria (6). Knowing about the mood of the Viennese,

Marshal F.I. On April 6, Tolbukhin nevertheless called on them to take active steps, to assist the Red Army "for the sake of preserving the capital of Austria, its historical cultural monuments" (7). It cannot be said that the call of the Soviet marshal had an effect. However, the population of Vienna still resisted the evacuation and met the soldiers of the Red Army as liberators. The entire burden of

the struggle to save Vienna fell on the shoulders of Soviet soldiers. Thanks to their swift and selfless actions, one of the most beautiful cities in the world was not destroyed by the Nazis, and hundreds of thousands of Viennese remained alive. On April 9, in the midst of the fighting for Vienna, the Soviet government issued a statement about Austria, which stated that the Soviet Union "does not pursue the goal of acquiring

any part of the Austrian territory or a change in the social order of Austria". During April 9 and 10, the

troops of the 3rd Ukrainian Front continued to advance towards the center of Vienna with battles. During this period, the offensive of the 20th Guards Rifle Corps of General N.I. Biryukov along the Danube through the Prater Park was of decisive importance: access to the bridges across the Danube could lead to the complete encirclement of the enemy group defending the Austrian capital. The guards fought forward and by April 10 reached the city center, where they joined forces advancing from the south and east.

Serious assistance to the troops of the 3rd Ukrainian Front was provided by the 46th Army of the 2nd Ukrainian Front. As early as April 2, she began crossing to the left bank of the Danube in the Bratislava region, after which she launched an offensive in a northwestern direction in accordance with the directive of the

Headquarters of the Supreme High Command of April 1 (8). The German command, given the danger of the 46th Army entering the area north of Vienna, as a result of which the last escape routes could be lost, reinforced its troops at the turn of the Morava River north of Gainburg. For this, separate parts were transferred from the depths and even from the Austrian capital itself. Having crossed the Morava, the soldiers of the 46th Army seized bridgeheads on its western bank and ensured the building of bridges for sappers, but they could not develop the offensive. Only by April 15 did the army reach the Korneiburg, Floridsdorf area, where it joined forces with the troops of the 3rd Ukrainian Front. By this

time, however, Vienna had already been liberated. The last battles in the Austrian capital were in the area of the imperial bridge across the Danube-Reichsbrücken. On April 13, battalion soldiers under the command of Captain D.F. Borisov penetrated the bridge, cut the wires, preventing an explosion, and then took possession of it. By 2 pm

on April 13, Soviet troops completely occupied Vienna. Continuing the offensive, the troops under the command of Marshal F.I. Tolbukhin, by April 15, advanced into the mountainous-wooded strip of the Eastern Alps and entrenched themselves there, and the troops of the 2nd Ukrainian Front began to regroup to develop an offensive towards Czechoslovakia.

Thus, in 31 days of the offensive, the armies of the 2nd and 3rd Ukrainian fronts advanced 150-200 km with battles,

defeated 32 enemy divisions, captured more than 130 thousand enemy soldiers and officers, captured and destroyed 2250 field guns, over 1300 tanks and assault guns (9). But the Vienna strategic offensive

operation also cost the Soviet troops great sacrifices: human losses in it amounted to 167,940 people, including irretrievable - 38,661 people. 603 tanks and self-propelled guns, 664 guns and mortars, 614 combat

aircraft.

The degree of intensity of the fighting in Austria can be judged by the average daily casualties. On the territory of this state, they amounted to 8556 people (10). This is 1.3 times more than in the counteroffensive at Stalingrad, 1.5 times more than in the East Prussian and 2.9 times more than in the Budapest operations.

Notes

1. Calculated on the basis of TsAMO. F. 267. Op. 243. D. 3469. L. 23-29.

2. History of military art: Album of schemes. M.: Military Academy named after M. V. Frunze, 1963. S. 73. 3.

Vienna Offensive Operation: Course of lectures. M.: Military Academy named after M.V. Frunze, 1956. S. 56-61. 4.

Barabashin I., Malakhov M. Vienna offensive operation 2-th and 3rd Ukrainian fronts. military thought. 1955. No. 1. S. 23-27.

5. TsAMO. F. 401. Op. 9511. D. 588. L. 28.

Chapter 6 The End of the Third Reich

Historical background

During the Seven Years' War on September 28, 1760, the corps of General Lieutenant Zakhar Grigorievich Chernyshov (1722-1784) captured Berlin. 4,000 Prussians were taken prisoner. But the Russian troops, having stayed in Berlin for four days and taking an indemnity, left this city when Frederick's troops

approached. On February 27, 1813, during the Foreign Campaign of the Russian troops, Infantry General Pyotr Khristoforovich Wittgenstein (1765-1843)

captured Berlin. By the beginning of 1945, more than a thousand kilometers separated the Soviet-German front and the line occupied by the Anglo-American troops. And Berlin was right in the middle. However, a month later, the situation changed dramatically. During the rapid offensive, the Red Army invaded Germany and by the end of January reached the nearest approaches to Berlin, to which it had only 60 km to overcome. The Anglo-American troops were able to launch an offensive only on February 8, when they recovered from a sudden and powerful German counterattack in the Ardennes. In early April, the Western allies, having surrounded the enemy's Ruhr grouping, were 300 km from the capital of

Germany. Both the Red Army and the Anglo-American troops sought to capture Berlin first. There was no military necessity for such a contest. The main reason was politically motivated, although the boundaries of the German occupation zones had already been agreed upon by the heads of government of the USSR, the USA and Great Britain at the Crimean Conference. According to its decisions, the western border of the Soviet zone of occupation was to be 150 km west of Berlin, which was also to be divided among the allies.

The idea to forestall the Red Army in capturing the German capital belonged to British Prime Minister W. Churchill. He outlined his views on this matter as early as the autumn of 1944 and, despite the changed situation, continued to defend them and

In the spring of 1945, on April 1, Churchill persistently urged US President Roosevelt: "If Berlin is within our reach, we must undoubtedly take it. It seems reasonable from a military point of view as well." The Commander-in-Chief of the Allied

Forces in Western Europe, General D. Eisenhower, had every reason to believe that "from a military point of view, it would be wrong at this stage in the development of the operation to make Berlin the main object of the offensive, especially in view of the fact that it is located 35 miles from the Russian line."

D. Eisenhower sent a personal message to Stalin on March 28, in which he outlined a plan for his further actions. He hoped at the end of April, and perhaps earlier, to defeat the enemy surrounded in the Ruhr and continue the offensive with the aim of cutting all his forces by connecting with the Soviet troops. The main blow was supposed to be delivered in the direction of Erfurt, Leipzig, Dresden, where a meeting with the Red Army was planned. D. Eisenhower's message did not say a word about Berlin, although it was reported at the Crimean Conference that it was here that the Anglo-American troops would advance. The Soviet

command these days was completing the planning of the Berlin operation. At a meeting of the Headquarters of the Supreme Command on April 1, in the presence of the commanders of the 1st Belorussian and 1st Ukrainian fronts, its plan was discussed. With powerful strikes by the 1st and

2nd Belorussian and 1st Ukrainian fronts, it was planned to break through the enemy defenses on the Oder and Neisse rivers, encircle and destroy the main forces of the Berlin grouping and, going to the Elbe, join up with the allies advancing

from the west. Having approved the plan, I. V. Stalin demanded that the operation be prepared as soon as possible. He ordered to start it no later than April 16, and complete it in 12 days.

It was on the same day, after the meeting, that JV Stalin replied to D. Eisenhower's message of March 28. He reported that this plan completely coincided with the plans of the Red Army command. At the same time, I. V. Stalin assured the ally that Berlin had allegedly already lost its former strategic importance and therefore the Soviet command allocates only secondary forces to take it, and the main blow

will inflict in another direction in order to connect with the Anglo-American troops. He further indicated that the offensive of the main forces would begin approximately in the second half of May. "However," he wrote cautiously, "this plan may be subject to change depending on changes in the situation." To Berlin! To some extent,

the last
addition should have justified
two inaccuracies deliberately made by the Soviet leader: firstly, the main forces of the Soviet troops were allocated for the attack on Berlin, and not the secondary ones; secondly, according to the just scheduled date, it should have started a whole month earlier. The German command sought to contain the advance of the Red Army at any cost in the hope of gaining time to conclude a separate peace with the Western powers. Such a policy, designed to split the anti-Hitler coalition, became absolutely

unrealistic after the Crimean conference of the heads of government of the three great powers. In a published communiqué on the results of this conference, Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill stated: "Nazi Germany is doomed. The German people, trying to continue their hopeless resistance, only makes the price of their defeat harder for themselves.

However, A. Hitler was not worried about the fate of the German people, but about the preservation of the fascist regime. All his thoughts about a separate peace were directed to the West. On the Eastern Front, he demanded from the Wehrmacht, on the contrary, to increase resistance. The special instructions of the National Socialist Party of April 3 stated: "Our eyes must be turned only to the East, regardless of what happens in the West.

Holding the Eastern Front is a prerequisite for a turning point in the course of the

war!" Trenches on the outskirts of Berlin When organizing defense on the Soviet-German front, the German command concentrated its main forces on the Berlin direction. Hasty defensive construction here began in January 1945, when Soviet troops were still tearing up the defenses on the Vistula. Its intensity increased due to the involvement of the local population, foreign

workers and even prisoners of war, although the use of the latter at military facilities was strictly prohibited by international laws. The basis of the enemy's defense in the Berlin direction was the line along the Oder and the Neisse.

The Germans created the strongest lines and in great depth against the 1st Belorussian Front, whose troops came closest to Berlin. Behind the Oder-Neissen border, the Germans equipped the Berlin defensive area, which consisted of three ring contours around the capital. The Berlin direction

was defended by the

troops of the Vistula and Center Army Groups under the command of Generals G. Heinrici and F. Scherner. On April 5, Hitler awarded the latter the rank of Field Marshal. The

troops concentrated in this sector from the Baltic to the Carpathians numbered about 1 million personnel, 1,500 tanks and assault guns, and 10,400 guns and mortars. They were supported by the main forces¹ of the Luftwaffe in the amount of 3.3 thousand combat aircraft, including 120 Me-262 jet fighters that had just appeared. The Soviet troops faced a hard struggle, especially the 1st Belorussian Front. Against the Kyustrinsky bridgehead on the river. Oder, captured by the troops of this front, General Heinrici concentrated 14 divisions on a 44 km section. On average, for every kilometer there were 60 German guns and mortars, 17 tanks and assault guns. The Germans equipped the most powerful resistance center on the way to Berlin on the Seelow Heights. Their steep slopes cut by ravines, which towered over the wide Oder valley 10-12 km from the Kyustra bridgehead, tanks could only overcome by roads. The front was to break through the enemy defenses prepared and occupied in advance by troops with a total depth of about 100 km. At the same time, the 2nd Belorussian and 1st Ukrainian fronts were opposed by much smaller forces, the defense of which had a depth of no more than 40 km. Obstacles on the way to Berlin The offensive of the Soviet troops was complicated by spring floods and mudslides. First of all,

this concerned the 2nd Belorussian Front, which was supposed to start breaking through the defense by forcing the Oder. The river here had two branches,

Ost-Oder and West-Oder, separated by a two-kilometer floodplain. The flood-filled interfluvium allowed movement only along dams. For the 1st Belorussian Front, the importance of the Oder as a water barrier was reduced by the presence of the Kyustra bridgehead. However, on the short way to Berlin, his troops had to advance through a densely populated area with many stone buildings. In the zone of upcoming actions of the 1st Ukrainian Front, the main natural barriers were the Neisse and Spree rivers, not to mention

continuous

forest areas.

G.K. Zhukov

The defeat of a powerful enemy grouping in the Berlin direction in a short time required great efforts. In addition to the troops of the three fronts, units of the forces of the 18th Air Army of Long-Range Aviation, the country's air defense forces, the Baltic Fleet and the Dnieper military flotilla were involved in the Berlin operation. In total, the strike force of the Soviet troops included 2.5 million personnel, 41.6 thousand guns and mortars, 6250 tanks and self-propelled artillery mounts, 7.5 thousand combat aircraft. Never before in the entire war had such a large number of forces and means been concentrated

for an offensive in such a narrow zone, the total width of which was only 385 km. As a result of a decisive concentration of forces and means, the Soviet command in the Berlin direction achieved significant superiority over the enemy. They outnumbered the enemy troops two and a half times in personnel, four times in artillery and tanks, and more than twice in aircraft.

The main role in the upcoming operation was assigned to the 1st Belorussian Front. Its troops were commanded by the illustrious commander Marshal G.K. Zhukov, who was also the Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces. Advancing along the shortest path to the capital of the Reich, the troops of the front delivered three blows. On the direction of the main attack, which Zhukov planned from the Kyustra bridgehead, four combined arms and two tank armies advanced. They were supposed to take Berlin on the sixth day of the operation. North and south of the bridgehead

attacked two combined arms armies. Cutting off the enemy from Berlin, they should have been on the eleventh day to go to the

Elbe. The 1st Ukrainian and 2nd Belorussian Fronts, led by Marshals I.S. Konev and K.K. Rokossovsky, closely cooperated with the troops of Marshal G.K. Zhukov. The 2nd Belorussian Front was to cut off the enemy from Berlin in Western Pomerania and destroy him with a strike by three armies from the area south of Stettin. The troops of I. S. Konev were to inflict two blows: the main one - with the forces of three combined arms and two tank

armies south of Berlin, and the auxiliary - with two armies to Dresden. At the same time, just in case, the Headquarters ordered I.S. Konev to provide for the turn of the tank armies to the north, in order, if necessary, to help the troops of the 1st Belorussian Front in mastering Berlin.

This solution suited I. S. Konev quite well. "Of course, this was my passionate desire," he wrote after the war about the attack on Berlin. "I'm not afraid to admit it even now."

However,

the commander of the 1st Belorussian Front, G.K. Zhukov, did not want to share his glory in capturing the capital of Germany with a neighbor. Returning from Moscow, he changed the task of the tank armies, which, according to the directive of the Headquarters of April 2, which had just been received, were to bypass Berlin from the north. Zhukov ordered the 1st Guards Tank Army to advance south of the city in order to reach it on the second day, and then on the western outskirts to join the 2nd Guards Tank Army, which delivered the main blow north of the

capital. Broken armored caps on the outskirts of Berlin From a military point of view, the change in the task of the tank army was quite justified. She could quickly reach the southern outskirts of Berlin faster than the combined arms armies and deprive the enemy garrison of the opportunity to receive assistance from the south. JV Stalin approved the new decision of the commander. "Act as you see fit, you know better where you are," he said to G.K. Zhukov, when he outlined his "arguments". Tasks for the fronts

April 2-6. There was very little time left before the start of the offensive, and a huge amount of work lay ahead. The main difficulty was to create shock groups. The fact is that the main forces of the fronts were away from the planned strikes. From East Prussia, two armies arrived in the 1st Ukrainian Front, which, following in railway echelons, had not yet arrived. K.K. Rokossovsky found himself in especially difficult conditions: the 2nd Belorussian Front had to regroup troops from the areas of Danzig and Gd^khni at a distance of 300 km and, having replaced the armies of the right wing of the 1st Belorussian Front, take up a starting position for an offensive in the lower reaches Oder. By April 16, the 2nd Belorussian Front could not keep up with entering new areas. Zhukov personally reported this to Stalin. ^ Well, - answered the Supreme, - we will have to start the operation, not waiting for the actions of the Rokossovsky front. If he is late for a few days - it does not matter. I. S. Konev The 1st Belorussian

and 1st Ukrainian fronts were ordered to go on the offensive on April 16, and the 2nd Belorussian - on April 20, 1945. And in general, the troops completed the preparation of the offensive by the appointed time. At the same time, it should be noted that the 28th and 31st armies of the 1st Ukrainian Front were still on the way. Also, some parts of the other two fronts did not have time to fully concentrate in new areas. All late formations and units had to be allocated to the second echelon and the reserve of fronts,

and start the operation without waiting for their approach. The tight deadlines for preparing the offensive were also reflected in other issues: reconnaissance of the opposing enemy, comprehensive support for the offensive, and, above all, logistics support for the troops. During their previous offensive, which had been carried out almost continuously for more than two months, most of the military material reserves were used up. It was very difficult to replenish them: the depots of the fronts and armies fell behind, rear communications stretched out, traffic along the partially destroyed railways and highways was restored very slowly.

The front commanders and staffs did everything possible to eliminate the shortcomings as soon as possible. By mid-April, the necessary inventories had been built up, although

the upcoming offensive from the Elbe River was provided with ammunition only taking into account

the planned supplies. The long-range gun of the Germans The troops had only to receive them in a timely manner and distribute them among formations and units. To facilitate the delivery of front and army bases were concentrated directly at the Oder, which did not require their movement until the end of the operation. Before the offensive, all front-line hospitals were emptied of patients who could not be treated in the front-line rear, and army hospitals were prepared to move and quickly receive the wounded.

PA Belov Painstaking work was carried out among the personnel. All the soldiers, from the marshal to the soldier, inclusive, understood well that the war was coming to an end. It is quite clear the desire of everyone to stay alive until the long-awaited victory. It was not easy to move such troops on the offensive. It was also of great importance that the troops, which had suffered heavy losses in previous battles, began to receive replenishment mainly due to those called up from the Baltic states, the western regions of Ukraine and Belarus, and Moldova, which had just been liberated from German occupation. For a long time (more than three years) they were in fascist occupation, were poorly trained in military affairs, and, to top it all, had a poor command of Russian. In addition, among this category of the population there

were many those whose families suffered from Soviet power in 1940, as well as people who served and worked for the Germans. All this had a negative effect on the morale and quality of combat training of the troops. Special work was organized by order of the higher command to quickly put the arrived replenishment into operation. The commanders of divisions and heads of political departments personally met the newly arrived soldiers. Rallies were immediately held, at which veterans congratulated newcomers on joining the ranks of the front-line soldiers, and urged them to multiply the military traditions of the unit. In a solemn atmosphere, weapons were handed over. The morale of all personnel was supported by letters from relatives and fellow countrymen, who urged soldiers and officers to quickly defeat the enemy and return home alive.

Of great importance for the preparation and conduct of the operation was the fact that the hostilities were conducted on German territory, where it was necessary to find a clear line between the civilian population and the enemy, who had recently occupied Soviet soil, creating unheard-of atrocities on it. It was important to direct the completely natural and just anger of the Soviet soldiers towards the invaders to carry out combat missions, while at the same time preventing outrages against local residents. It

was not easy to organize and carry out appropriate educational work. In the midst of preparations for the attack on Berlin, the newspaper ^ (Red Star) on April 11 published an article by the popular Soviet writer I. Ehrenburg. In it, he called for merciless revenge on all Germans. A few days later, Pravda pointed out the fallacy of the writer's views. However, in the minds of Soviet soldiers revenge on the Germans prevailed, and it was very difficult to quickly overcome it. In the memory and before the eyes of many, there were thousands of burned cities and villages, the ruined lives of relatives and friends, dead comrades in arms, their own wounds inflicted by the enemy still hurt. Berlin As always, it was decided to put the main

emphasis on the Communists. But the previous heavy losses in battles led to the collapse of many party organizations. All possible measures were taken to restore them. Joining the party was practiced not only one person, but also in groups, facilitated As a result, in just a month - from March 15 to April 15 - the party organizations of the three fronts accepted more than 17 thousand soldiers and officers into their ranks. Heightened attention

was given to Soviet paraphernalia. So, in the armies of the 1st Belorussian Front, special State flags of the USSR with a size of 1.5 PZ m were prepared. Each army advancing on Berlin made one such flag, it was intended to be hoisted on the defeated parliament building of the Third Reich - the Reichstag. But the army commanders were also quick to take the initiative. It is known that in the 3rd shock army they decided to prepare nine banners - according to the number of rifle divisions included in it. In turn, corps, divisions, regiments and even subunits had their own red flags. the best

soldiers were instructed to install them on an object captured from the enemy, which became a tradition during the war.

While the Soviet troops were completing preparations for the Berlin operation, the Western allies were rapidly moving east. On April 11, the armored divisions of the 9th American Army, General W. Simpson, began to reach the Elbe. A little more than 100 km remained to the capital of Germany. Having broken away from the main forces, the divisions approaching the river experienced a shortage of fuel. The general assured that if supplies were brought to him within two days, he would be in Berlin in 24 hours, ahead of the Russians.

The initiative of the commander of the 9th Army was reported to General D. Eisenhower, but the commander-in-chief rejected the proposal. On April 15, he wrote to Washington: "Although it is true that we captured a small bridgehead across the Elbe, it should be remembered that only advanced units reached this river; the main forces are still far behind. Realistically assessing the situation, D. Eisenhower, as commander in chief, was aware that he did not yet have the necessary forces to capture Berlin. His reports to the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of England were clearly based on mathematical calculations and were full of sound conclusions. Nevertheless, W. Churchill resigned himself to this only after the Red Army broke through the German defenses in the Berlin direction.

Prior to the start of the general offensive, the 1st Belorussian Front carried out reconnaissance in force. The battalions allocated for this from the divisions of the first echelon, reinforced by tank companies and batteries of self-propelled artillery mounts (ACS), with the support of artillery and aviation, attacked enemy positions from the Kyustrin bridgehead on the morning of April 14. Over the next two days they advanced 5 km. As a result of the actions of these battalions, it was established that the enemy decided stubbornly not to defend the first position, but concentrated all his main forces on the second and third positions. As a result, the well-planned artillery preparation of the Soviet troops turned out to be ineffective, as it fell on an almost empty place. On the outskirts of Berlin, the Nazis fought

to the death. But the advancing battalions also quickly lost their strike force.

Therefore, at 3 pm on April 14, after a 15-minute fire raid along the main defense line, rifle regiments of first-echelon divisions were brought into battle. In particular, in the zone of the 5th shock army, 8 rifle regiments were thrown into battle, reinforced by 106 tanks and self-propelled guns and supported by the entire artillery of the army. By the middle of April 15, these regiments had captured the first position, and in some directions wedged into the second. The advanced units of the 8th Guards Army of General V. I. Chuikov achieved the greatest success. The German 20th Motorized Division could not hold back their onslaught. Enraged by the news received about this, Hitler ordered an investigation. Without waiting for his results, he ordered that all the personnel of the offending division of the order and other insignia be taken away until the soldiers and officers deserve them again. However, something else is important: the German command took reconnaissance in battle for the offensive of the main forces and believed that it was reflected. But this was a delusion and an incorrect assessment of the situation. To Berlin! On April 16, two hours before dawn, the troops of Marshal G.K. Zhukov launched an offensive with the main forces of the front. After a short but powerful artillery preparation, the infantry and tanks moved to the enemy defenses. With the beginning of the attack, 143 anti-aircraft searchlights

were turned

on in the breakthrough areas. On each kilometer of the breakthrough area, an average of about 300 guns and mortars fired crushing fire, more than 40 tanks of direct infantry support attacked. The use of searchlights to blind the enemy by subsequent historians is credited to G.K. Zhukov. But few of them thought that these searchlights, fixed permanently, after a few minutes began to shine in the back of the advancing troops, and the advancing themselves quickly created a kind of screen from the raised dust. Against the background of this screen, the silhouettes of tanks, self-propelled guns and people were seen very clearly, and the enemy shooters and gunners could not imagine

special difficulty to conduct aimed shooting. True, some

argue that the Germans mistook the dazzling light of searchlights for a new weapon.

The enemy was so stunned that he was able to organize resistance

only at dawn.

The enemy's resistance reached a particular strength in the middle of the day on April 16, when the attacking troops of the 1st Belorussian Front approached the Seelow Heights, where the Germans concentrated their main efforts. Here the attack of the rifle divisions quickly bogged down, and a new decision had to be made to continue the offensive.

Berlin offensive operation (April 16 - May 8, 1945) G.K. Zhukov had two tank armies to develop success. But he planned to bring in these armies after the infantry had mastered this powerful anti-tank obstacle. However, the efforts of the first echelon of the front to break through the defenses at the heights were not enough. In addition, the war was coming to an end, and Georgy Konstantinovich felt sorry for the people

for the sake of the success of the planned operation was not going to. Later he would write in his well-known memoirs: "When preparing the operation, we somewhat underestimated the complexity of the nature of the terrain in the area of the Seelow Heights, where the enemy had the opportunity to organize an insurmountable defense ^ First of all, I must take the blame for the underdevelopment of the issue." But a little lower, he, wanting to share the responsibility with others, adds: "I think that if not publicly, then in private reflection, the responsibility for the lack of readiness to take the Seelow Heights on an army scale will also be assumed by the corresponding army commanders." And even lower: "Now, after a long time, thinking about the plan of the Berlin operation, I came to the conclusion that the defeat of the Berlin enemy grouping and the capture of Berlin itself could be carried out

somewhat differently."

Marshal was well aware that history does not tolerate subjunctive moods and that his repentance is later. But he still could not help but dwell on this point, which causes much controversy among historians. On the afternoon of April 16,

the 1st and 2nd Guards Tank Armies of Generals M.E. Katukov and S.I. Bogdanov were brought into battle. Tanks could advance only along the roads along which the enemy created a strong anti-tank defense, for which he widely used rapid-fire anti-aircraft guns taken from the anti-aircraft

defense of Berlin.
IG Poplavsky

Despite all efforts, on the first day, the Soviet troops failed to complete the task. Heights were taken only on the second day. The losses of the Soviet troops on April 16 were significant.

VI Chuikov

The fierce struggle to break through the Oder defensive line, the total depth of which reached 30 km, continued. Every day the offensive began after a strong artillery preparation and proceeded with continuous support from artillery fire and air strikes. Tank and rifle formations stubbornly gnawed through the powerful defenses of the enemy with joint efforts. Only on the fourth day, by the end of April 19, the main strike force of the 1st Belorussian Front broke through the Oder line. At the same time, the tank armies, which, according to the plan of G.K. Zhukov, were supposed to reach Berlin on the second day of the offensive, failed to break away from the infantry and followed directly in the combat formations of the troops. They were 30 km away from the capital. In his memoirs, Marshal G.K. Zhukov continues to repent and blame circumstances about the low pace of the offensive. In particular, he writes that "in the area of the Seelow Heights, the enemy had the opportunity to organize an insurmountable defense. Being 10-12 kilometers from our starting lines, having dug deep into the ground, especially behind the reverse slopes of the heights, the enemy was able to save his forces and equipment from the fire of our artillery and

air bombings." The 3rd and

5th shock, 8th guards, 47th armies of generals V.I. Kuznetsov, N.E. Berzarin, V.I. Chuikov and F.I. Petrovich struck from the Kyustrinsky bridgehead. By the end of the 60s, when the memoirs of Georgy Konstantinovich were published, only Chuikov remained alive, who could no longer or did not want to argue with the former commander of the 1st Belorussian Front. Therefore, the Berlin operation is still perceived as it was described by G.K. Zhukov. G.K. Zhukov himself has always been particularly tough in matters of command and control. In the Berlin operation, he demanded not

cease the offensive day or night. The commanders of divisions, corps, and even army commanders received his order to transfer their observation posts to the battle formations of units and formations, and for the sake of quickly completing the assigned tasks, reserves should not be spared. But in practice, all this had little effect on the

course of the operation. The troops, especially those advancing in front of the tank armies, suffered heavy losses. In the 2nd Guards Tank Army on April 18, the commander of the 12th Guards Tank Corps, General N.M. Telyakov, was seriously wounded, the commander of the 48th Guards Tank Brigade, Colonel V.I. Hero of the Soviet Union. Significantly more soldiers, sergeants and junior officers died.

The slow advance of the troops of the 1st Belorussian Front worried Headquarters. They demanded from Moscow to accelerate the pace of the offensive. Zhukov had to listen to the reproaches of I.V. Stalin. "You shouldn't have brought the 1st Guards Tank Army into action in the sector of the 8th Guards Army (that is, to bypass Berlin from the south. - Ed .), and not where the Stavka demanded," the Supreme Commander sharply scolded his deputy.

Some historians believe that this reproach against G.K. Zhukov was unfair if only because things were no better north of Berlin. North of the Kyustrinsky bridgehead, the 61st and 1st Polish armies of generals P. A. Belov and S. G. Poplavsky penetrated the enemy's defenses by only 8 km in four days, and the 69th and 33rd generals V. Ya. Kolpakchi and V. D. Tsvetaev - only 6 km. The 1st Ukrainian Front went on the offensive simultaneously with the 1st Belorussian. On the night of

April 16, reconnaissance in force

was carried out, artillery and aviation preparations for the attack began at dawn, as well as the setting of a dense smoke screen. The front line of the German defense was smoky not only in the 90-kilometer zone, where the shock group of the 1st Ukrainian Front was advancing, but also on the rest of the 300-kilometer line. Such a huge smokescreen was used for the first time during the war years. On the one hand, it had the goal of covering the crossing of troops across the river. Neisse, and on the other - to prevent the enemy

determine the direction of the front

blows. During a powerful artillery preparation, which lasted almost two and a half hours, the Soviet infantry crossed the Neisse and attacked the enemy. An hour later, heavy bridges were built and tanks of direct combat came to the aid of the infantry.

infantry support.

The enemy fiercely defended himself, throwing three tank divisions and a tank destroyer brigade to the aid of his infantry. But Marshal I.S. Konev also constantly increased his efforts. The 4th Guards and 25th Tank Corps, commanded by Generals P.P. Poluboyarov and E.I. Fominykh, were introduced into the battle. Then, due to the fact that these corps had too few tanks, the forward detachments of the 3rd and 4th Guards Tank Armies also had to be

brought into

battle. By the end of the day, the 3rd and 5th Guards Tank Armies, together with the 13th Army under the command of Generals V.N. Gordov, A.S. Zhadov and N.P. Pukhov, broke through to a depth of 13 km. At the same time, it was necessary to overcome not only the resistance of the enemy, but also forests, in which fires broke out from air strikes and artillery fire. Things went worse in the Dresden direction. The 52nd Army of General K.A. Koroteev, advancing there, together with the 2nd Polish Army of General K.K. On April 17, VD Tsvetaev, the commander of the 1st Ukrainian Front,

reinforced his

main strike force by bringing the 3rd and 4th Guards Tank Armies into battle. Having broken the resistance of the enemy, the tankers of Generals P. S. Rybalko and D. D. Lelyushenko crossed the Spree on the move and the next day completed the breakthrough of the defensive line, which had a depth of up to 40 km. VN Gordov Intense battles flared up in the direction of

Dresden. Worried about the breakthrough

of the defense on the Spree River, the commander of Army Group ^Center, Field Marshal F. Scherner, concentrated nine divisions in the Görlitz area. A counterattack to the north along the left flank of the main strike force of the 1st

The Ukrainian Front, he sought to delay her attack on Berlin. Without waiting for all the divisions of the counterattack grouping to concentrate, Field Marshal General ordered on April 18 to deliver the intended strike. The commander of the 52nd Army, General Koroteev, was forced to interrupt the offensive and repel the onslaught of the enemy. But the counterattack could not change the situation for a long time. Under cover of the 52nd Army, the 2nd Polish Army continued its offensive. By this time, formations of the 28th Army also began to arrive in the 1st Ukrainian Front, and I.S. Konev ordered its commander, General A.A. Luchinsky, to advance to the main direction.

Considering that after crossing the Spree on the way of the troops of the 1st Ukrainian Front to Berlin, the enemy did not have large reserves, and the 1st Belorussian Front still had to break through a strong defense, the Stavka decided to turn the tank armies of the 1st Ukrainian Front to the capital. I. S. Konev received the corresponding instructions on April 17 and immediately set the task for the commanders of the 3rd and 4th Guards Tank Armies: after overcoming the Spree, develop an offensive against Berlin in order to break into its southern outskirts on the night of April 21. The task was not easy: it was 120 km to Berlin in a straight line, and this distance had to be overcome with battles in just two days. Having received the appropriate command, the tank armies of Rybalko and Lelyushenko crossed the Spree on April 18 and rushed to the north. In an effort to be the first to break into Berlin at all costs, I. S. Konev placed his main hopes on the highly experienced commander Rybalko. To ensure the rapid accomplishment of the assigned task, the front commander reinforced the 3rd Guards Tank Army with an anti-aircraft artillery division, a breakthrough artillery corps, and a fighter air corps.

On April 21, in the offensive zone of the 3rd Guards Tank Army, I.S. Konev brought the arrived 28th Army into battle, reinforcing it with an artillery division. For the rapid transfer of rifle units, vehicles were allocated to the commander of the 28th Army, General A.

A. Luchinsky.

On the way of the tankmen of General P.S. Rybalko to Berlin was the settlement of Zossen. Here, deep underground, the main command post of the Wehrmacht was located, where the headquarters of the operational leadership, headed by General A. Jodl, and the headquarters of the ground forces, headed by General G. Krebs, were located. With the appearance of Soviet tanks, the personnel of both headquarters in a hurry left Zossen and evacuated to Berlin.

N. P.

Pukhov Despite the rapid advance, the 3rd Guards Tank Army was unable to complete the task within the specified time. Only on the evening of April 22, i.e., almost a day late, did the advanced tank brigades approach Berlin. However, it was not possible to overcome the canal on the move: the defense of the southern outskirts of the city turned out

to be strong. PS Rybalko The troops of the 1st Belorussian Front also stubbornly advanced towards Berlin. Having received a message about the attack on the capital of the tank armies of the 1st Ukrainian Front, Marshal G.K. Zhukov sent an urgent directive to the commanders of the 1st and 2nd Guards Tank Armies on the evening of April 20. They were given a "historical task: to be the first to break into Berlin and hoist the Banner of Victory." To accomplish this task, it was necessary to allocate the best brigade from each corps and "no later than 4 am on April 21, at any cost, break through to the outskirts of Berlin and immediately convey to Stalin and announcements in the press for a report." However, the troops of the 1st Belorussian Front managed to break through to the city only in the evening, when the 2nd Guards Tank Army had already reached the northeastern outskirts, and with it the rifle formations of the 3rd and 5th shock armies. The 1st Guards Tank Army, advancing on the southern flank of the main strike force of the 1st Belorussian Front, lagged behind. These troops still had up to 20 km to the c

Zhukov was dissatisfied with such results of the hostilities. "The defense of Berlin is very poorly organized," he assured the army commanders in a telegram dated April 22, "and the operation of our troops to take the city is developing very slowly." The front commander demanded to organize a round-the-clock offensive. The lagging 1st Guards Tank Army was ordered to cross over

Spree in the sector of the 8th Guards Army and, no later than April 24, capture Tempelhof in the southeast of the capital.

In general, by the end of April 22, the threat of encirclement loomed over the enemy, who was defending in Berlin and to the south. Only 40 km separated the troops of the 1st Belorussian Front, bypassing Berlin from the north, from the troops of the 1st Ukrainian Front, advancing on the capital from the south. The headquarters of the Supreme High Command

demanding

that G.K. Zhukov and I.S. Konev speed up the encirclement of the Berlin group. On April 24, the 8th Guards and 1st Guards Tank Armies of the 1st Belorussian Front met with the 3rd

Guards Tank and 28th Armies on the southeastern outskirts of Berlin. The next day, the 2nd Guards Tank and 47th Armies, bypassing the capital to the north, connected with the 4th

Guards Tank Army of the 1st Ukrainian Front west of Berlin. The enemy grouping of more than 500 thousand people was not only surrounded, but also cut into

two parts:

one remained in Berlin, the other to the south of the city. P. I. Batov By April 20, the 2nd Belorussian Front completed preparations for the offensive. By the end of April 19, his troops had completely cleared the territory between the Ost- and West-Oder and, having built bridges across the eastern arm, took up their starting position for forcing the West Oder. The bulk of the artillery had to be left in front of the Ost Oder. The flooded interfluvium made it impossible to place artillery closer, which made it difficult to effectively support the attack of the front line, which passed behind the main, western, branch of the Oder. As planned, the offensive of the main forces of the 2nd Belorussian Front began on April 20. According to the new task received by Rokossovsky two days ago, after crossing the Oder, his troops were supposed to strike in a southwestern direction on Berlin no later than April 22 in order to help Marshal Zhukov in

capturing the capital. In the 50-kilometer strip south of Stettin, the 65th, 70th and 49th armies were advancing, commanded by Generals P.I. Batov, B.C. Popov and I.T. Grishin. Each army broke through the defenses in a narrow area from 4 to 6 km, where almost all forces were concentrated

Stettin was defended by the 2nd shock army. Its task was to demonstrate the forcing of the Oder and prevent the transfer of enemy troops to the direction where the main blow was delivered.

Despite the fact that the armies had nine rifle divisions each, against which only one German infantry division was defending, on April 20, only the 65th and 70th armies managed to capture three small bridgeheads up to one and a half kilometers deep on the left bank of the West Oder. At the same time, the 49th Army, where Rokossovsky concentrated the main forces, failed to cross the river. General Grishin was summed up by reconnaissance: not understanding the intricacies of branches and channels, she incorrectly identified the main channel of the river, and hence the front line of the enemy's defense. The result was disastrous: aviation and artillery struck at an empty place, and the subunits that moved to attack came under destructive enemy fire. The 49th Army crossed the Oder only on April 25th. On April 21,

Rokossovsky had to transfer the main efforts of the front strike force to the right flank in the zone of the 65th Army, which achieved greater success. The maneuver was carried out by retargeting the strikes of the 4th Air Army, regrouping artillery and crossing facilities. By evening, six ferry crossings for cargoes up to 16 tons were built in the section of the crossing of the 65th Army across the West Oder. The capabilities of the army increased sharply. In addition, crossings with a capacity of 30-50 tons were built through the eastern branch by this time, which made it possible to transfer heavy equipment, including tanks. On April 24, the entire army was transported across the Oder. General description of the

defense of the Berlin fortified area General X. Manteuffel, commander of the 3rd German tank army, which was defending against the troops of the 2nd Belorussian Front, threw all the reserves to the breakthrough site of the 65th Army. With the support of the artillery of the Stettin fortress, they continuously counterattacked the Soviet troops. Reflecting these blows, the rifle battalion of Major V. D. Myachin, who only a year ago put on the shoulder straps of a junior lieutenant, especially distinguished himself. On April 22 and 23, Myachin personally led the companies on the attack seven times. For skillful command of a battalion during the capture and holding of a bridgehead, and with small losses, for p

courage and heroism, the battalion commander was awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union. On the chest of a talented officer, in addition to the orders of the Red Star, the Patriotic War, Alexander Nevsky and Suvorov, the highest awards of the Motherland were added - the Order of Lenin and the Gold Star of the Hero. On April 23, heavy pontoons were carried through the channels of the interfluvium and a bridge with a carrying capacity of 60 tons was assembled across the West Oder. The enemy opened heavy artillery

fire on it. Although a number of pontoons were damaged, the bridge was quickly restored, and the German batteries that had fired on it were destroyed. Soviet tanks began crossing

without

much interference from the enemy. On April 25, the 1st Guards Tank Corps of General M.F. Panov, having entered the battle on the sector of the 65th Army, completed the breakthrough of the main line of defense. He failed to achieve greater success: the resistance of the enemy, reinforced by reserves, was growing. On that day, the advance of the 70th Army, advancing in the center of the front's shock group, turned out to be more significant. Taking advantage of the fact that the enemy threw the main forces against the 65th Army, the rifle divisions of the 70th Army pulled ahead and advanced more than 20 km by the end of the day. Now the river blocked their way. Randov, along which the second line of defense of the Germans passed. The left-flank 49th Army crossed the Oder, using the crossings of the neighboring army, and by evening advanced

By this time, the strike of the troops of the 2nd Belorussian Front was no longer required to help in capturing Berlin. Assessing Stalin's decision to turn the troops of this front to Berlin, Zhukov wrote: "There is such a proverb:" Hurry - you will make people laugh. And so it happened with this directive of the Headquarters. On April 25, Rokossovsky was ordered to act in a general direction to the northwest, pressing the enemy to the sea. The offensive of the Red Army on Berlin changed the situation on the Western Front. On April 15, the commander of Army Group ^B, Field Marshal V. Model, whose troops were surrounded in the Ruhr, after much deliberation, ordered the older and younger soldiers, who had just been drafted into the army, to go home, the rest from April 17 to stop resistance and surrender or break out of the environment. However, they tried to break through

few. On April 20, mass surrender began. Model himself shot himself the next day. The Western Front of the Wehrmacht ceased to exist. On April 21,

Eisenhower sent through the US military mission in Moscow to the Chief of the General Staff of the Red Army, General A. I. Antonov, information about his plans and proposed the line of the Elbe and Mulda rivers to connect the Anglo-American troops with the Soviet ones. Antonov agreed. Marshals Zhukov, Konev and Rokossovsky were warned about the possibility of meeting with the troops of the Western allies on April 20, when they were informed of the signals agreed with the allies for mutual identification.

According to the instructions received, the commanders of the armies were to, upon meeting, by agreement with the senior commander of the allied troops, establish a temporary line,

preventing their mixing. The first

meeting took place on April 25 on the river. Elbe. As the chief of staff of the 1st Ukrainian Front, General I.E. Petrov, informed Antonov that day, at 15:00 in the Torgau area, the advanced units of the 58th Guards Rifle Division met with reconnaissance groups of the American 69th Infantry Division.

The moment was truly historic: for almost a year, crushing a common enemy, the allied armies advanced towards each other and finally united. Moscow marked the important event with a traditional salute: 24 artillery salvos from 324 guns thundered. Until now, the liberation of the capital of a union republic or state has been celebrated in this way. And Stalin's congratulatory order was addressed not to the immediate hero of the occasion - the troops of the 1st Ukrainian Front, as was usually done, but to the entire active army. On the same occasion, on April 27, Stalin's appeal to the Red Army and the Allied troops was published. W. Churchill and G. Truman, who became President of the United

States after the death of Roosevelt, did the same. Despite

the fact that the event on the Elbe was assessed by the heads of the allied powers as the division of the German troops into two parts, it had a purely symbolic character. Only reconnaissance units of the 1st American Army met with the troops of the 1st Ukrainian Front. Its main forces were mutually

determined boundary of the river. Mulde, which is 50 km west of the Elbe. The main forces of the 1st Ukrainian Front reached Mulda later, in early May, preparing for the Prague

operation. The long-awaited meeting took place. The first meeting was followed by mutual visits. On April 26, the commander of the 58th Guards Rifle Division, General V.V. Rusakov, received the commander of the 69th Infantry Division, General E. Reinhardt. The next day, the commander of the 34th Guards Rifle Corps, General G.V. Baklanov, met the commander of the 5th Army Corps, General K. Hubner. Most of all, the gray-haired Americans were surprised and delighted by the youth of the Soviet general, who at that time was in his thirty-fifth year. On April 30, General A. S. Zhadov, commander of the 5th Guards Army, hosted a reception in honor of General E. Hodges, commander of the 1st American Army. Two days earlier, at a reception with Marshal Konev, the commander of the 12th US Army Group, General O. Bradley, said: "Our people have always followed the battles and victories of the glorious Red Army with admiration, and my soldiers and officers

sought to imitate the fighting example that the troops set for them 1st Ukrainian Front. Return visits were made by Soviet military leaders. Everywhere the soldiers of the allied armies, still hardly aware of the end of the war so disgusted by everyone, met as brothers in arms. Until the last moment, Hitler and his associates hoped that the counter offensive of the Red Army and the Anglo-American troops would lead to an armed clash, and after that, the collapse of the alliance of the three great powers. However, their calculations did not materialize; there were no skirmishes between the allies, and, consequently, the last illusions of the Nazi

leadership for a successful end to the war collapsed irrevocably. After April 25, the main task of the troops of the 1st Ukrainian and 1st Belorussian fronts was to defeat the enemy groupings surrounded in Berlin and to the south of it. On the advice of his faithful colleague, General A. Jodl, A. Hitler decided to turn his back on the

Anglo-American troops, and concentrate all efforts on holding Berlin. As early as April 20, the Fuhrer intended to fly to South Germany and f

plans changed dramatically: he decided to personally lead the defense of the capital and, in case of failure, die here. On the same day, the dictator held the last meeting with his close associates, after which they went to the troops to organize assistance to Berlin. Troops were gathered there as well. Thus, the 12th Army, which until then held the defense along the Elbe against American troops, was hastily transferred to the east. She received an order to break through towards the troops of the 9th and

4th Panzer Army, surrounded south of Berlin, to cut off the armies of the 1st Ukrainian Front, which broke into the capital from the south. Then the uniting German armies were to advance to the north and break the encirclement of the Berlin garrison. From the

north, the army group of SS Obergruppenführer F. Steiner was sent to help the fascist capital. It was assumed that the actions of the Görlitz group, which continued to strike at the troops of the 1st Ukrainian Front advancing on Dresden, would also contribute to the implementation of this plan.

By ending resistance in the West, Hitler intended to create fertile ground for an agreement with the Anglo-American leadership. As General Jodl stated to the Chief of Staff of the Luftwaffe, General K. Koller, in a personal conversation on April 23, "it is completely indifferent what the Americans do on the Elbe. Perhaps it will be possible to prove by this that we want to fight only against the Soviets. Encircled south of Berlin,

the enemy troops, which were based on the 9th Army under the command of General T. Busse, numbered up to 200 thousand people, more than 300 tanks and assault guns, over 2 thousand guns and mortars. The troops of the 1st Belorussian and 1st Ukrainian fronts, which encircled this grouping, outnumbered it in personnel by almost one and a half and in artillery by four times. Tanks on both sides were equally divided, because the main forces of the tank forces of both Soviet fronts fought for Berlin. The 1st Ukrainian Front found itself in a very

difficult situation. His troops were to act simultaneously in four directions: advancing to the north, storm Berlin; prevent

a breakthrough from the encirclement of the 9th army to the west, to disrupt the offensive of the 12th army to the east; repel a counterattack by the Gerlitz grouping from the south. The assault on Berlin and the defeat of the 9th Army had to be carried out in close cooperation with the 1st Belorussian Front, whose troops, in addition, bypassing the capital from the north, went to the Elbe.

Destruction of the encircled enemy group southeast of Berlin (April 26 - May 1, 1945) The complexity of the upcoming

tasks to be solved by the two fronts required clear and prompt cooperation. Meanwhile, the offensive of the troops in the Berlin direction was still coordinated by I.V. Stalin. But since the Supreme Commander was in Moscow at that time, his reaction to changes in the situation could not be timely. Therefore, in a number of cases, the commanders of fronts, and sometimes even armies, often acted independently. Despite the lack of a unified leadership, the operation to encircle and destroy

surrounded by the enemy developed successfully. The command of the 1st Ukrainian Front not only foresaw, but also revealed in time the preparation of the German 9th Army for a breakthrough to the west. I. S. Konev paid the main attention to the organization of defense in the area where General Busse was preparing a strike. So, the task was assigned to the 3rd Guards Army, as well as the 28th and 13th armies, which allocated one rifle corps for defense.

V. Ya. Kolpakchi

Having gone over to the defense with a front to the east, these troops hastily equipped three defensive zones with a total depth of up to 20 km. At the same time, the 3rd, 69th and 33rd Armies and the 2nd Guards Cavalry Corps of the 1st Belorussian Front received the task of dismembering and, in cooperation with the troops of the 1st Ukrainian Front, destroying the German grouping south of Berlin with attacks from the northeast. The 4th Guards Tank and 13th Armies were to act against the 12th Army of the enemy, which continued to advance in a general north-western direction, being 50 km west of the encircled enemy forces by the end of April 25. To support the troops, Marshal I.S. Konev allocated six aviation corps, which accounted for three-quarters of all the forces of the 2nd Air Army. In the strip of the 1st Belorussian Front

the main aviation forces supported the troops that stormed Berlin. In the interests of the armies that attacked the 9th Army of the enemy, G.K. Zhukov allocated only

three assault aviation divisions. On the night of April 26, the Germans, using forests, secretly concentrated five divisions in a narrow area, but already at dawn, air reconnaissance of the 1st Ukrainian Front opened them. The commander of the 4th bomber corps, General P.P. Arkhangelsky, immediately lifted 70 bombers into the air, which struck. The enemy was weakened, but nevertheless went on the offensive and attacked the Soviet troops that had not yet had time to dig in. The blow fell just at the junction of two divisions of the 21st Rifle Corps

of General A. A. Yamanov. The Germans advanced in columns. Tanks were moving in my head, which literally rammed the battle formations of the defending troops. As the prisoners showed, they were driven

forward not only the threat of execution for failure to fulfill a combat mission, but also the fear of the horrors of Siberian penal servitude, strongly inflated by fascist propaganda. Already three hours after the start of the attack, the enemy strike group broke through to a depth of 10-15 km.

In fierce battles, the battalion of the 293rd Guards Rifle Regiment under the command of Captain I.M. Filippovsky showed particular persistence. The positions of the battalion were attacked by about two battalions of infantry supported by six tanks and assault guns. On April 26, the enemy tried to break through eight times, but to no avail. When help approached, the captain raised the companies to attack. They captured 450 Germans alone. For skillful command, personal courage and heroism, Captain I. M. Filippovsky was awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union, and many officers and soldiers of the battalion were awarded

orders and medals. M.

E. Katukov

The broken front of the encirclement was restored thanks to a counterattack by the 25th Panzer Corps, commanded by General E. I. Fominykh. The 2nd Air Army of General S.A.

Krasovsky. The aircraft crews of the 1st and 2nd Guards Attack Air Corps worked especially hard. In groups of eight to ten stormtroopers, they delivered continuous strikes. The German soldiers could not withstand the raids and scattered across the burning

forest. S. A

Krasovsky Troops of the 1st Belorussian Front pressed the 9th Busse Army from the north. On the morning of April 27, the 3rd Guards Army of the 1st Ukrainian Front under the command of General V.N. Gordov went on the offensive to meet them. The growing danger of annihilation, the menacing orders of A. Hitler, one after another, drove the encircled group of Germans to the west, towards the 12th Army. In turn, Field Marshal W. Keitel and General Jodl, on whom the Fuhrer entrusted the organization of a counter offensive, demanded the most decisive

action from both armies.

Encircled elsewhere, the 9th Army of General Busse and the encircled divisions of the 4th Panzer Army were squeezed by Soviet troops from all sides. In addition to this, they were subjected to heavy air strikes. Choking in the smoke of forest fires, the Germans desperately tried to escape from this hell. Busse used the night of April 27 to prepare a new breakthrough, and in the morning launched another attack. The day of April 29 turned out to be the most productive for the German troops remaining in the encirclement: they managed to break through 25 km in a narrow six-kilometer section. But the counterattacks of the Soviet troops, supported by aviation, forced the enemy to stop further advance. The units that broke through were surrounded in three areas isolated from each other. Less than 30 km remained before joining the 12th Army.

The 12th Army of General W. Wenck went on the offensive on April 25th. But it didn't last long. The 5th Guards Mechanized and 102nd Rifle Corps of Generals I.P. Ermakov and I.M. Puzikov repelled the blow. A day later, enemy activity sharply decreased.

At the categorical demand of Keitel and Jodl, Wenck committed the last two divisions remaining in reserve into battle and on the 29th made another attempt to break through to the 9th Army. But she doesn't

crowned with success. The 2nd Air Army of General S. A. Krasovsky struck such a force that Venk had to abandon the further offensive. The next day, Keitel admitted that the attempt to unblock Berlin by strikes from outside had completely failed, which he was forced to report to Hitler.

Nevertheless, 20 thousand enemy soldiers and officers stubbornly fought their way out of the

encirclement to join the Wenck army. On the night of May 1, they went to the rear of the 5th Guards Mechanized Corps, which was defending against the 12th Army. Only 3-4 km remained between those leaving the encirclement and the army of Wenck.

In this situation, the corps of General Timakov took up a circular defense. To help him, the commander of the 4th Guards Tank Army threw all his reserves. Fierce battles broke out. In an effort to prevent the connection of the enemy, the Soviet troops strained all their forces. Even the wounded did not leave the battle formations. The attack aircraft of the 1st Guards Aviation Corps, General V. G. Ryazanov, played a decisive role. Through the joint efforts of tankers and pilots, the enemy was defeated.

On May 1, the 9th Army and the encircled part of the 4th Panzer Army of the enemy ceased resistance and threw out the white flag. In this encirclement, the Germans lost 60 thousand killed, and 120 thousand people surrendered. Only a few managed to break through to the west. As trophies, the Soviet troops got more than 300 tanks and assault guns, 500 guns and mortars, over 17 thousand cars and many other property. At the same time, the troops of the 1st Ukrainian

Front repulsed the counterattacks of the Gerlitz group of Germans. On April 19, its nine divisions struck at the 52nd, 2nd and Polish armies advancing in the Dresden direction, pushing them 20 km to the north.

To help the troops repulsing the counterattack, Marshal I.S. Konev sent formations of the

5th Guards Army, including the 4th Guards Tank Corps of General P.P. Poluboyarov, who managed to reach the Elbe. Attack and fighter aircraft were allocated to support the troops, and from April 22, part of the bombers. Reflecting counterattacks

enemy, the Soviet troops went on the defensive and by the end of April 24

stopped him

further promotion. In an effort

to alleviate the situation in Berlin, Hitler demanded that Field Marshal Scherner, commander of Army Group Center, resume the offensive of the Görz group. In the morning, she again launched a counterattack. The German attacks continued until the end of April, when the enemy had completely exhausted his offensive capabilities. After that, having wedged almost 35 km, the Gerlitz group went on the defensive. To reach the rear communications of the 1st Ukrainian Front, as Field Marshal Scherner assumed, she did not

could.

The main task of the 1st Belorussian Front, along with which part of the troops of the 1st Ukrainian,

was to storm Berlin. Back in early March, Hitler declared it a fortress city. The defense of Berlin was prepared carefully.

Trenches were dug and barbed wire were erected on the outskirts of suburbs and in parks. There were a large number of anti-tank barriers and obstacles on the streets and squares (barricades, fences, anti-tank ditches, gouges, rail hedgehogs, etc.). All stone houses were turned into strongholds. In addition, underground communications (metro, sewerage) were widely used for the defense of the city. The area of government buildings prepared most strongly for defense, many of which were mined.

Destruction of the encircled enemy grouping in Berlin (April 26 - May 2, 1945)
For defense,
Berlin

was divided into eight sectors, each of which was defended by a garrison of 15 to 25 thousand people. The defense of each building and the surrounding area was assigned to specific units. In total, the encircled garrison of Berlin by April 25 totaled 300 thousand people, 3 thousand guns and mortars, 250 tanks and assault guns. It was headed by General G. Weidling, appointed on April 12 as the commandant of the fortress city. As part of his closest aides

there were many famous military leaders, many of whom swore to die,

but don't surrender

the city. The troops of the 1st Belorussian and 1st Ukrainian fronts that surrounded the capital had about 464 thousand soldiers and officers, 14.8 thousand guns and mortars, almost 1500 tanks and self-propelled artillery installations. During the assault on the city, another 12.5 thousand Polish

soldiers joined them. As a

result, Soviet troops outnumbered the enemy one and a half times, in artillery and tanks - 5-6 times. Such superiority would be quite enough to defeat the enemy in the field, but not in the city, where the use of tanks is naturally difficult, and manpower and firepower hidden in stone buildings have great advantages.

in front of those who

come. On April 22, Admiral K. Doenitz, who was to lead the troops stationed in Northern Germany, received a telegram from A. Hitler with the following content: The Battle of Berlin is decisive for the fate of Germany. All other tasks are of secondary importance. To postpone all activities of the naval forces, to support Berlin by transferring to S. I. Bogdanov To raise the morale of

the German

troops, the next day, a statement by J. Goebbels was broadcast on the radio, which said that the Fuhrer himself took over the leadership of the defense of Berlin and assured that this would give the battle for the capital a European significance. According to him, the entire population came out to defend the city, and party members armed with panzerfausts, machine guns and carbines took up posts at street intersections. S. I. Rudenko Meanwhile, in the

current

situation, further resistance in Berlin made no sense. The German army was doomed. Even before the encirclement, the city ran out of coal reserves, the power supply was cut off, and on April 21 all enterprises, trams, metro stopped, water supply and sewerage stopped working. With the release of Soviet troops to the outskirts of the city, the garrison and residents

lost food stores. For a week, the population was given 800 g of bread, 800 g of potatoes, 150 g of meat and 75 g of fat per person. The life of the city was paralyzed, famine began. Further resistance only led to the destruction of the capital and huge casualties, including among civilians. In order to avoid unnecessary bloodshed, the command of the 1st Belorussian Front on April 23 offered the Berlin garrison to surrender. But there was no answer. On the afternoon of the 25th and on the night of April 26, more than 2 thousand aircraft of the 16th and 18th air armies, commanded by General S.I. Rudenko and Air Chief Marshal A.E. Golovanov, delivered three massive strikes on

the city. In the morning, four combined arms armies and the same number of tank armies from both fronts, advancing from the north, east and south, began to storm Berlin. The blows were delivered on narrow sections of the general 100-kilometer front of the city's encirclement. Having penetrated into the depths, the Soviet troops cut off one quarter after another and violated the enemy's orderly defense system.

The main role in the destruction of the enemy in the buildings was played by assault groups and detachments, which consisted of infantry reinforced with tanks, artillery, sappers and flamethrowers. The infantry, with their support, burst into the building and, advancing from one floor to another, destroyed the soldiers who had settled there. The battles went on around the clock simultaneously on the ground, in underground communications and in the air. Changing forward.

Due to the fact that Berlin was shrouded in the smoke of fires, the pilots had great difficulty distinguishing their own from others. Dive bombers were mainly used to support the assault squads, with the best of the best selected crews. With accurate strikes, they ensured the assault on the most durable buildings. Fighter aircraft not only covered the troops, but also blocked the Berlin garrison from being supplied by air. The illustrious pilot Major I.N. Kozhedub shot down his last two of the 60 aircraft destroyed by him during the war over Berlin, for which he was

was awarded the third Gold Star of the Hero of the Soviet Union. Among those shot down here was a Me-262

jet fighter. The military power

of fascist Germany was collapsing. One cannot but say about the detachment of gliders of the Dnieper military flotilla, which was attached to the 5th shock army. Up to the river Spree, ten small ships of the detachment were delivered by car. Launched on the night of April 23, under heavy fire, they transferred forward units of the 230th and 301st rifle divisions to the shore occupied by the enemy. The captured bridgehead made it possible to start a ferry crossing. Towing ferries, the sailors transferred 27 tanks, 600 guns and mortars across the Spree. In just three days, the detachment delivered more than

16 thousand people to the other side. The feat of the entire personnel of the detachment was awarded, and 9 soldiers were awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, by the end of the crossing, only 16 people remained alive in the detachment, and of them only two Heroes - the detachment commander, Lieutenant M. M. Kalinin and the boat commander, foreman G. P. Kazakov. The rest died, including Heroes of the Soviet Union sailors N. A. Baranov, A. E. Samofalov, V. V. Cherinov, who were not even nineteen years old. As always, the infantry had the hardest time. Who else, besides foot soldiers, could break into buildings and destroy the enemy in basements and underground utilities? Without infantry, it was dangerous even for tanks

to move through the streets. The fact is that the Germans widely used faustpatrons. Use this simple anti-tank weapon

even teenagers from the Volkssturm were trained; it fired only at 30 m, but pierced armor up to 200 mm. On the narrow streets of the city, faustpatrons became a thunderstorm of tanks. One only

The 2nd Guards Tank Army lost 204 tanks in a week of fighting in Berlin. Half of them turned out to be lined with faustpatrons. That is why the tankers preferred to advance under the cover of machine gunners, whose task was to destroy those who had settled in the houses

shooters armed with fauspatrons. S. I.
Rudenko

At the same time, tank armies, having a small number of motorized infantry in their composition, could not simultaneously provide escort for tank units advancing through the city and create assault groups to capture buildings. I had to allocate the 1st Polish division for joint operations with the 2nd Guards Tank Army, and the 3rd Guards Tank Army was accompanied by three rifle divisions of the 28th Army. The 1st Guards Tank Army advanced jointly with the 8th Guards Army. At the same time, each corps of General M. E. Katukov advanced with one of the rifle corps of General V. I. Chuikov. This interaction solved the problem. AS Zhadov However, new difficulties soon arose: all the troops rushed to the center of Berlin, to the Reichstag. Naturally,

the zones of

operations of the troops, including the tank armies, narrowed, and they had nowhere to turn around. At this time, the tank brigade was advancing along some street, the width of which allowed, as a rule, two or three tanks deployed in a line to pass, and behind them - three or four self-propelled artillery mounts. Rest

stood, suffering needless losses.

K. A. Koroteev

The Soviet command, along with the leadership of the hostilities, had to take care of the local population. These duties were assigned to the commander of the 5th shock army, General N.E. Berzarin, appointed military commander of Berlin. Commandant's offices were created in all newly taken districts of the city. Since famine arose in the city, the rear departments of the

fronts and armies organized the distribution of food to the townspeople. Soviet soldiers themselves shared food with children, women and the elderly. On April 26, Potsdam, a suburb of the capital, was cut off from the group surrounded in Berlin. The next day, the 47th Army of General F.I. Perkhovich, together with the formations of the 2nd and 4th Guards Tank Armies, destroyed the German

troops.

In Berlin itself, thanks to strikes from the north and south, the enemy was squeezed into a narrow, no more than 2-4 km, strip extended from the west

to the east for about 20 km. By the evening of April 28, the enemy was cut into three parts. Communication between them was preserved only through underground communications. To prevent the Soviet troops from using the metro, Hitler ordered the locks on the Spree to be opened, although he could not help but know that the section of the metro between Leipziger Straße and Unter den Linden, where the stations were hiding

thousands

Berliners. At

22:00, General Weidling reported to A. Hitler that ammunition was left for approximately two days of battle and that, in his opinion, further resistance was useless. The general proposed a plan to break through the remnants of the German units to the west, to the Anglo-American troops. "The Fuhrer thought for a long time," Weidling said already in captivity. "He regarded the situation as hopeless." A. Hitler rejected the idea of a breakthrough. Soviet troops stubbornly made their way to the Reichstag. From the north, the 3rd shock army of General

V.I. Kuznetsov advanced across the Spree River to the Reichstag. Guardsmen of the 8th Guards and 1st Guards were advancing from the southeast through the densely built-up part of the city. Broken equipment on the streets of Berlin. This was a violation of the established border, since the station was part of the offensive

zone of the 1st Ukrainian Front. Even more than the command of the 1st Belorussian Front, the General Staff and Headquarters were to blame for it, which failed to ensure the interaction of the two fronts at the proper level, sending them to the same goal. The main reason for the mixing of troops was the untimely demarcation of the areas of operation of the fronts. With the beginning of the Berlin operation, the border between the troops of the 1st Belorussian and 1st Ukrainian fronts was defined only to a depth of 50 km - to Lübben. Despite the fact that the troops of Marshal Konev broke into Berlin on April 21, the Stavka established a dividing line between the fronts in the city only on April 23. Difficulties were not long in coming. I. S. Konev and G. K. Zhukov began to receive one report after another from their troops that their own aircraft were attacking them. To figure out which front's aviation was to blame for this, in those conditions it was

impossible.

The dividing line appointed on April 23, while streamlining the actions of the troops on land, did not eliminate the confusion in the air. As we moved towards the center of Berlin, it grew. Pilots often made mistakes. As reported by the command of the 3rd Guards Tank Army, the 16th Air Army, which was part of the 1st Belorussian Front, dealt an accidental blow to the 6th Guards Tank Corps, causing serious damage to it. It happened that the tankers of General P.S. Rybalko were bombed by aviation of their own front. It came to the point that General P. S. Rybalko asked I. S. Konev to completely remove aviation. When all the troops rushed to the Reichstag, even artillery sometimes fired on their neighbors. Street fighting in Berlin On April 28,

advancing westward south of the Landwehr Canal, the 29th Guards Rifle Corps of the 8th Guards Army crossed the railways that go north to the Anhalt and Potsdam stations. At the same time, the advance of the 9th mechanized corps of the army of General Rybalko to the north, along the railways, to the Landwehr Canal fell just behind the rear of the 8th Guards Army. The consequences of moving troops perpendicular to each other could be unpredictable. D. D. Lelyushenko At 20 hours 45 minutes, I. S. Konev sent a telegram to G.

K. Zhukov:

^According to Rybalko's report, the armies of Chuikov and Katukov were given the task of advancing northwest along the southern coast of the Landwehr Canal and thus cutting battle formations troops of the 1st Ukrainian Front, advancing north. I ask you to change the direction of the offensive of the armies of Chuikov and Katukov. A copy of the telegram was immediately handed over to Moscow to the Chief of the General Staff, General A.I. Antonov. Surrender Having received a telegram from the commander of the 1st

Ukrainian Front, G.K. Zhukov reported to I.V. Stalin that the offensive of I.S. Konev's units in the rear of the 8th Guards and 1st Guards Tank Armies created confusion and mixing of made it extremely difficult to control the battle. He then concluded that "their further movement in this direction may lead to even greater mixing and make management more difficult." G.K. Zhukov asked to install a new

the dividing line between the fronts or replace the troops of I.S. Konev in Berlin by the troops of the 1st Belorussian Front. Literally a few minutes later, Moscow established such a dividing line that required the withdrawal of the armies of Rybalko and Luchinsky from the city to the west. As a result, behind the dividing line, which was established from 24:00 on April 28, was the 9th mechanized ^ 1st corps, which continued to advance towards the Reichstag. But, having received the directive of the Stavka, I.S. Konev ordered P.S. Rybalko to withdraw the troops. "He (General Rybalko. - **Ed.**) Literally had to overpower himself in order to fulfill my order," Marshal Konev recalled after the war. - And I'm not inclined

to condemn him for these personal experiences that are well understood by me.

The 3rd shock army was the first to reach the Reichstag. Advancing from the north, its 79th Rifle Corps broke through to the bridge over the Spree and, after fierce fighting, captured it on the night of April 29. Only 500 m remained from the bridge to the Reichstag, but they turned

out to be unusually

difficult. The Nazis defended the Reichstag literally with the last of their strength. The area in front of the building was occupied by selected SS units and a Volkssturm battalion. The previous night, three companies of the Naval School from Rostock had arrived here for reinforcements. Almost 5 thousand German soldiers and officers were concentrated at the walls of the Reichstag, their combat operations were supported by three field artillery divisions and an anti-aircraft artillery

division. In engineering terms, the defense was also prepared quite carefully. The defense system on the outskirts of the building included three lines of trenches covered with minefields and an anti-tank ditch filled with water. 15 reinforced concrete pillboxes were built in the most important areas. Communication passages connected the trenches with the cellars of the Reichstag, where large stocks of weapons, ammunition, medicines and

food. Demining

by Soviet sappers of the bridge across the Elbe. Dresden, 1945. The assault on the

Reichstag began before dawn on 30 April. The 150th and 171st Rifle Divisions, commanded by General

V. M. Shatilov and Colonel A. I. Negoda. The attackers were met with a sea of fire from various types of weapons, and soon the attack bogged down. The first attempt to take possession of the building on the move ended in failure. A thorough preparation of the assault began. To support the infantry attack only for direct fire, 135 guns, tanks and self-propelled artillery mounts were concentrated. Dozens more guns, howitzers and rocket launchers fired from closed positions. From the air, the attackers were supported by squadrons of the 283rd Fighter Aviation Division of Colonel S. N. Chirva. At 12 o'clock artillery preparation began. Half an hour

later the infantry went on the assault. She had only 250 m left to reach her intended goal, and it seemed that success had already been ensured. ^ (Everything roared and rumbled around, - recalled Colonel F. M. Zinchenko, regiment

which was part of the 150th Infantry Division. - It might have seemed to some of the commanders that if his fighters had not yet reached, then they were about to achieve their cherished goal_ So the reports flew on command. After all, everyone so wanted to be the first! .. "

General V. M. Shatilov, first by telephone and then in writing, informed the commander of the 79th Rifle Corps, General S. N. Perevertkin, that at 14:25 the rifle battalions under the command of captains S. A. Neustroev and V. I. Davydov broke into the Reichstag and hoisted a banner on it. At this time, units continue to clear the building from the Germans. Residents of Berlin return to the city after the fighting. May 1945

The long-awaited news spread further - to the headquarters of the 3rd shock army and the 1st Belorussian Front. This was reported by Soviet radio, followed by foreign radio stations. The Military Council of the 1st Belorussian Front, by order of April 30, already congratulated the soldiers on their victory, expressed gratitude to all soldiers, sergeants, officers of the 171st and 150th rifle divisions and, of course, General S. N. Perevertkin and obliged the Military Council of the Army submit the most distinguished for awards.

A. V. Gorbатов

After receiving the news about the fall of the Reichstag, military cameramen, photojournalists,

journalists, among them the famous writer B. L. Gorbатов. What they saw was disappointing: the assault battalions were still fighting on the outskirts of the building, where there was not a single Soviet soldier and not a single flag. The third attack began at 18:00. Together with the attacking battalions of the 674th and 380th rifle regiments, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel A. D. Plekhanov, Colonel F. M. Zinchenko, two groups of volunteers advanced, led by the adjutant of the commander of the 79th rifle corps, Major M. M. Bondar and commander of the control battery of the artillery commander of the corps, captain V. N. Makovetsky. At the initiative of the command and the political department of the corps, these groups were created specifically for hoisting flags made in the corps over the Reichstag. This

attack was successful: the battalions of captains S. A. Neustroev, V. I. Davydov, senior lieutenant K. Ya. Samsonov and a group of volunteers broke into the building, about which F. M. Zinchenko reported to General V. M. Shatilov. He

repeatedly demanded throughout the afternoon to break into the Reichstag and, which worried him most of all, to hoist a banner on it. The report pleased the division commander and at the same time upset him: the banner had not yet been installed. The general ordered to clear the building of the enemy and "immediately install the banner of the Military Council of the Army on its dome"! To speed up the task, the division commander appointed F. M. Zinchenko commandant of the Reichstag.

However, Colonel F. M. Zinchenko understood, as he wrote after the war, "that the Reichstag cannot be completely cleared either in the evening or during the night, but the banner must be installed at any cost! ..". He ordered to recapture as many rooms as possible from the enemy before dark, and then give the personnel a

rest. To hoist the banner of the Military Council of the Army, handed over to the regiment on April 26, the commander allocated a group led by the political worker of the battalion, Lieutenant A.P. Berest. Sergeants M. A. Egorov and M. V. Kantaria, who were part of it, hoisted the flag on the Reichstag on the night of May 1. Two days later it was replaced by a large red banner.

The Soviet flag over the Reichstag It should also be noted that in addition to the banner of the Army Military Council, the Reichstag building was reinforced

many other flags. The first flag was hoisted by a group of captain V.N. Makov, who attacked together with Neustroev's battalion. Senior sergeants A.P. Bobrov, G.K. Zagitov, A.F. Lisimenko and Sergeant M.P. Minin, led by the captain, immediately rushed to the roof of the Reichstag and fixed the flag on one of the sculptures of the right tower of the house. It happened at 22:40, which was two or three hours before the hoisting of the flag, which history was destined to become the Banner of Victory. A large group of soldiers was presented for awards, and the entire group of captain V.N. Makov, at the request of the commander of the 79th Rifle Corps, to the title of Hero of the Soviet Union. However, by order of the commander of the 1st Belorussian Front dated May 18, 1945, they were awarded only the Orders of the Red Banner. The same award was received by M. A. Egorov and M. V. Kantaria, and the title of Hero was awarded to them together with the commanders of the battalions that stormed the Reichstag V. I. Davydov, S. A. Neustroev and K. Ya. Samsonov only a year later - 8 May 1946, on the first anniversary of the Victory over Nazi Germany.

Victory!

At the end of April, the Imperial Chancellery, in whose underground shelter Hitler took refuge, was connected to the outside world only by radio communication. The Fuhrer, still hoping for outside help, kept asking when the troops would release the capital. Finally, on April 30, the answer came. Keitel radioed that Busse's 9th Army had not escaped from the encirclement, and Wenck's 12th Army could not advance on Berlin. Having lost all hope of salvation, Hitler shot himself at 15:30 (Central European time). Later, a number of "works" appeared devoted to the miraculous salvation of the Fuhrer, but none of them was based on a scientific basis. On the night of May 1, a German parliamentary officer arrived at the location of the troops of the 8th Guards Army with a package addressed to the Soviet command. It contained a request to establish the time and place of the front line crossing by the Chief of the General Staff of the Wehrmacht Ground Forces, General G. Krebs, for a message of particular importance. The request was granted, and at 3 o'clock Krebs was delivered to the commander of the army, General V. I. Chuikov. The Chief of the General Staff reported on the suicide of A. Hitler, on the composition of the new German government and conveyed the appeal of Goebbels and Bormann to the Chief

To the command of the Red Army with a request for a temporary cessation of hostilities in Berlin and the start of peace negotiations between Germany and the USSR.

The

commander of the defense of Berlin, G. Weidling, and his headquarters surrender. Berlin,

May 2,

1945. The message was handed over to Marshal G.K. Zhukov, who, in turn, reported it to Moscow, having allocated his deputy General V.D. Sokolovsky for negotiations with the German leadership in Berlin. Soon I. V. Stalin called: "Tell Sokolovsky that no negotiations, except for unconditional surrender, should be conducted either with Krebs or with other Nazis." I. V. Stalin's answer was brought to the attention of General Krebs, who at 9 o'clock left for the German troops to transmit the answer of the Soviet command. At 18 o'clock the answer came with the rejection of the unconditional surrender of the garrison.

By the way, the negotiations did not lessen the bitterness of the enemy's resistance; after the refusal to capitulate, the Soviet troops intensified their attacks on the enemy. On May 2, at one o'clock in the morning Moscow time, the radio station of the 79th Guards Rifle Division, which was part of the 8th Guards Army, received a radiogram in Russian: "Please cease fire. By 12 o'clock. 50 min. according to Berlin time, we send parliamentarians to Potsdam

bridge".

At the indicated time, a German officer arrived on the bridge, who, on behalf of General Weidling, announced the readiness of the Berlin garrison to stop resistance. On the morning of May 2, Weidling and a group of officers subordinate to him surrendered. According to the general, he made such a decision on his own when he learned that Goebbels had poisoned himself. Weidling was asked to issue a written order for the surrender of the garrison troops subordinate to him, which he did. Soon, at the request of the Soviet command, a similar order was issued on behalf of the German government by Goebbels' deputy G.

Fritsche.

Field Marshal Keitel signing the Instrument of Surrender of the German Army

radio sets were transmitted to the German troops. A mass surrender began. On May 2, 134,700 surrendered. Among them were soldiers and officers from various units and various branches of the armed forces, military officials, military police officers. Nevertheless, individual armed groups of fascists continued, contrary to orders, to make their way to the west. There were two largest ones: one (numbering about 17 thousand people) broke through from Berlin, the other (up to 30 thousand soldiers and officers) - from Spandau. Together with them, about 300 prominent functionaries of

the Nazi Party came out of the encirclement. The Soviet command took the necessary measures to prevent the exit of these groups. On the paths of their movement, artillery fire and attacks by tank troops were planned. As a result, both groups were divided into parts and on the same day

were destroyed.

So Berlin fell. Columns of prisoners moved dejectedly through the streets of the defeated capital. Generals and officers walked ahead of the columns. Many of the prisoners were wounded and supported by their comrades. The surviving residents of Berlin silently looked at the columns of prisoners, trying to see their relatives and friends. And nearby are crowds of jubilant Soviet soldiers, who are stormily celebrating their

victory. The usual picture of the finale of any war_ Winners Berlin fell, but the war still continued. Since April 26, the 2nd Belorussian Front has been advancing in a northwestern direction, trying to press the 3rd Panzer Army of General X. Manteuffel to the Baltic Sea. Marshal K.K. Rokossovsky increased the strength of his strikes against the enemy. In addition to his three armies, the 2nd shock army of General I.I. Fedyuninsky also went on the offensive. All tank, mechanized ^ 1st and cavalry corps, which had crossed the Oder, entered the battle. With the support of the 4th Air Army of General K. A. Vershinin, they rapidly advanced in depth. The 21st Army Group of the Allied Forces was advancing towards the troops of K.K. Rokossovsky. It was commanded by British Field Marshal B. Montgomery. At the end of April, the British troops crossed the Elbe and, without meeting resistance, quickly went east. May 3 in

The garrison of Hamburg surrendered. On the morning of May 5, German troops and naval forces ceased hostilities in Holland and Denmark, in northwestern Germany and the islands

of the North Sea. However, the Wehrmacht continued to fight against the Red Army. The commander of Army Group ^ Vistula, which included the 3rd Panzer Army, received an order from Admiral Doenitz, who became Hitler's successor, to conduct military operations in such a way as to withdraw as many of his forces as possible to the west, beyond the Demitz, Wismar line, i.e. to the zone

fighting between

British and American troops. The 2nd Belorussian Front followed closely behind the 3rd Panzer Army, although during the retreat the enemy mined the roads and blew up the bridges. With stubborn resistance on the defensive lines prepared along the rivers, canals and in the inter-lake defile, he

tried to stop the persecutors. But the

Soviet troops continued their offensive. On May 2, the 2nd shock and 65th armies reached the coast of the Baltic Sea. The 70th and 49th Armies, pursuing the divisions of the 3rd Panzer and the newly formed 21st Armies, advanced to the west. Before joining Field Marshal Montgomery's army group, Soviet troops had only 20-30

km.

The main forces of Montgomery at this time were advancing north to the Baltic Sea. For cover from the east, the field marshal allocated one American corps. On May 4, Soviet troops at the line of Wismar, Schwerin, Demitz joined with the allies, but the enemy disappeared somewhere without a trace. It turned out that two days ago, the commanders of the 3rd Panzer and 21st Armies of the Wehrmacht, Generals Manteuffel and K. Tippelskirch, established contact with the Americans. At the very last moment, when the Soviet troops were about to

approach, both German armies crossed the American front line and laid down their arms. At the same time, Manteuffel, with his 200,000th group, surrendered to one American infantry division. It is

important that for

the entire period of hostilities the 2nd Belorussian Front did not allow the enemy to transfer a single division to Berlin. Even those units that the German command had already begun to move from near Danzig to the capital were pinned down and

crushed. The

troops of the 1st Belorussian Front, which during the assault on Berlin bypassed it from the north and from the south, were now advancing towards the Elbe. On May 2, the forward detachments of the 61st Army of General P. A. Belov met south of Wittenberg with the 84th Infantry Division of the American troops. In the period from May 4 to May 7, they reached the Elbe, connecting with the 9th American Army, the 1st Polish and 47th armies. Retreating under their onslaught, the 12th Army of General Wenck, after preliminary negotiations with the Americans, crossed to the western bank of the river and surrendered to them. According to Tippelskirch, then "it was possible to save about 100 thousand people from

Russian captivity.

Allies

Further south, having replaced the troops of the 1st Ukrainian Front, the line of the Elbe River was occupied by the 3rd, 69th and 33rd armies of the 1st Belorussian Front. Two rifle divisions of the 13th Army of the 1st Ukrainian Front came to the Mulda River, joining the main forces of the 1st American Army, while its main forces were moving south from May 2, preparing for an attack on Prague. The Soviet troops conducting the Berlin operation received significant assistance from the Baltic Fleet, commanded by Admiral VF Tributs. On April 22, the People's Commissar of the Navy, Admiral N. G. Kuznetsov, demanded that V. F. Tributs, immediately after the defeat of the Germans in Königsberg and Danzig, support the offensive of the troops of the 2nd Belorussian Front along the sea coast. VF Tributs sought to prevent the evacuation of German troops from

East Prussia and Courland to the ports of the western part of the Baltic Sea. To accomplish the assigned tasks, the fleet used the air force, torpedo and patrol boats, minesweepers and

General N. E. Berzarin congratulates the soldiers In early May, the aircraft of the Baltic Fleet launched massive attacks on the enemy's naval base in Swinemünde. The success exceeded all expectations: the German battleship Schlesien was sunk, six transports, three destroyers, several minesweepers and patrol boats were destroyed and damaged. The troops of the 2nd Belorussian Front, using the strikes of the fleet, captured Swinemünde and the island of Rügen on May 5-6. On the evening of May 7, the commanders of the Soviet fronts,

acting against Germany, received a directive from the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command, which stated that the German Armed Forces both on the Western and Eastern Fronts on May 8 from 23:00 CET, according to the agreement reached in Reims, should capitulate. The Headquarters ordered by any means to notify the command and troops of the enemy about this, to demand that they lay down their arms and surrender, and in the event of continued resistance, to deliver decisive blows. True, there was no one to resist in the zone of the 1st and 2nd Belorussian fronts. Only the enemy grouping concentrated in southern Germany and Czechoslovakia, as well as the Wehrmacht naval forces in the Baltic Sea, evaded surrender. At the commandant's office in Berlin, May 1945. So, the Berlin operation was successfully completed. The 1st and 2nd

Belorussian and 1st Ukrainian fronts

completed the task assigned to them. From April 16 to May 8, advancing to a depth of 160 to 220 km, they captured Berlin and joined with the Anglo-American troops. In such a short time, the Red Army defeated 93 German divisions, a large number of separate regiments and battalions; about 480 thousand prisoners of war, 11 thousand guns and mortars, more than 1.5 thousand tanks and assault guns, 4.5 thousand combat aircraft were captured. So high performance

Not

was achieved in any of the earlier operations of the Great Patriotic War. The Berlin operation contains a lot of instructive information and rightfully constitutes our national military pride. If at Stalingrad the defeat of the 300,000th enemy grouping took more than two months, then the destruction of the half-millionth grouping surrounded in the Berlin operation took only seven days for the Soviet command.

Nevertheless, the assessment of the Berlin operation contains many exaggerations inspired by the euphoria of the victorious end of the war. First of all, it must be remembered that the general military-political situation in which the operation was carried out was especially favorable. Germany waged an armed struggle on two fronts, simultaneously repulsing blows from the east and west. To her, who remained in

loneliness, now opposed the powers that had a strong economy, huge human resources, powerful armed forces. Zhukov's conversation with Eisenhower And with all

this, the troops of the three Soviet fronts and the forces of the Baltic Fleet lost 361,367 people killed, wounded and missing in the three weeks of the offensive. The fronts lost 2108 guns and mortars, 1997 tanks and self-propelled artillery,

917 combat aircraft. The Berlin operation is listed in the Guinness Book of Records as the bloodiest battle of our time. Participated on both sides

3.5 million people, 52 thousand guns and mortars, 7750 tanks and 11 thousand aircraft.

Of course, such huge losses of Soviet and Polish troops are primarily a consequence of the desperate resistance of the Germans. Their fear was too great that the time had come to answer for the numerous atrocities committed in the occupied territory of the USSR. However, the actions of the Red Army also

suffered from shortcomings. This is primarily a haste with the start of the offensive, caused by political motives: the desire to get ahead of the Anglo-American allies in capturing Berlin. The frontal attack of the 1st Belorussian Front on Berlin was unsuccessful, which led to the need to break through the defense

enemy in the strongest place. This is what some of the defenders of Berlin looked like in the spring of 1945. Recognizing the shortcomings in the attack on Berlin, Marshal G.K. Zhukov wrote in his memoirs: mu Ukrainian^ There could, of course, be another option: to entrust the capture of Berlin to one 1st Belorussian Front, reinforcing its left wing with at least two combined arms and two tank armies, one aviation army and the corresponding artillery and engineering units. But one must understand that the 1st Belorussian Front could receive such reinforcement only at the expense of 1

th Ukrainian Front, that is, at the expense of I.S. Konev, who himself also wanted to take the German capital. But I. S. Konev, 20 years after the war, admitted that after the encirclement of Berlin, there was no need to help the 1st Belorussian Front in storming the city. Despite all subsequent talk and research, the fall of Berlin was the crowning achievement in the war against Nazi Germany. Soviet soldiers entered this city victorious, and a red flag was raised over the Reichstag. To commemorate this event, the medal "For the Capture of Berlin" was established. It was handed over to the direct participants in the storming of the city - 1082 thousand soldiers, sergeants and officers of the Red Army and the Polish

Army. For the Berlin operation in the 1st Belorussian and 1st Ukrainian fronts, 1,141 thousand soldiers received orders and combat medals. G.K. Zhukov became three times Hero of the Soviet Union, I.S. Konev and K.K. Rokossovsky were awarded the second Gold Star. The honorary title of Berlin was given to 187 units and formations.

Chapter 7 To Prague

“^Today, May 9, 1945, as a result of a swift night maneuver of tank formations and infantry, the Soviet troops broke the enemy’s resistance and liberated the capital of Czechoslovakia allied to us, Prague, from German invaders^ The enemy group “Center” was surrounded by three Ukrainian fronts^ ” (From the operational report of the Soviet Information Bureau) After the

defeat of the enemy in the Berlin direction, the only force capable of providing serious resistance to the Red Army, in early May 1945, remained the Army Group Center" and part of the

Army Group "Austria", concentrated on the territory of Czechoslovakia. They numbered 900 thousand soldiers and officers, 9.7 thousand guns and mortars, 1.9 thousand tanks and assault guns, about a thousand combat aircraft (1). The territory of Czechoslovakia was captured by Germany as a result of the

Munich Agreement in March 1939. After that, the entire economic potential and human resources of this country were entirely placed at the service of Germany. Czechoslovak tanks and other military equipment reinforced the Wehrmacht, Czechoslovak units were widely used in the war against the USSR and other countries, mainly as auxiliary troops. At the same time, in the country itself and even in military units there have always been many people who were openly hostile to Germany. The resistance movement in Czechoslovakia unfolded almost from the very beginning of the German occupation

of its territory. On December 12, 1943, after the successful completion of the Battle of Kursk and a number of other operations by the Red Army, a Soviet-Czechoslovak treaty of friendship, military assistance and post-war cooperation was signed in Moscow.

Opposition to Germany in Czechoslovakia began to intensify, especially after the decisive victories of the Red Army and the opening of a second front by the Allies in 1944, and from the captured Czechs and Slovaks began

formation of the first national units. The fighting of the Red Army on Czechoslovak soil began in the autumn of 1944, but they entered the decisive stage at the beginning of 1945. Then, by decision of the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command, an offensive of the 4th and 2nd Ukrainian fronts was

launched in the Western Carpathians. Troops of the 4th and 2nd Ukrainian fronts under the command of General A.I. Eremenko and Marshal R.Ya. Malinovsky, having liberated Slovakia, at the beginning of May 1945 continued to smash the enemy in the territory of the Czech Republic. From the north, occupying defenses in the foothills of the Ore Mountains and the Sudetenland at a turn of more than 400 km, the troops of the 1st Ukrainian Front of Marshal I. S. Konev hung over the enemy grouping in Czechoslovakia, but the main forces of this front at that time were still in the Berlin area. From the west, the 3rd American Army under the command of General J. Patton advanced to the border of Czechoslovakia, with the task of capturing the border of Ceske Budejovice, Pilsen, Karlovy Vary, already agreed with the Soviet command. Against American troops in a strip of about 200 km along the river. Mulde and the borders of Czechoslovakia were defended by five

German divisions that had suffered losses in previous battles. The approach of Soviet and American troops intensified the resistance movement in the Czech Republic. According to some reports, in April 1945 there were 120

partisan detachments operating there, numbering 7.5 thousand people (2). But the activities of the partisans were of a defensive nature, which was explained primarily by the lack of weapons and the lack of experienced command personnel and the absence of a single central headquarters of the partisan movement. The connection of individual detachments with the command of

The formation of the Czech National Council (CNC), as a single leading Czech Resistance, was difficult and was completed only by the end of April 1945. This self-proclaimed authority consisted of representatives of politically diverse national organizations. The communists played an important role in it. The Council was headed by Professor of the University of Prague A. Prazhak. In domestic policy, the CHNS was guided by "the broadest democracy", in foreign policy - by "closest cooperation" with the Soviet Union and "friendly relations" with the rest

allies (3). However, deep internal contradictions and weak ties with the rebels on the ground reduced the leading role of the Council.

The immediate start of the uprising was not included in the calculations of either the CHNS or the communists. On May 4, the underground leadership of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia decided to postpone the call for an uprising for two or three days. On May 5, the decision not to start the uprising was taken by about 100 representatives of 70 enterprises in Prague, Beroun, Kladno and Pilsen, gathered according to illegal

Central Council of Trade Unions (4).

The uprising in Prague was being prepared by the command of the former Czechoslovak military personnel ^ (Bartosz "headed by General K. Kutlvashr. Acting independently of the CHNS, in the first days of May it came into contact with the commander of the 1st division of the so-called Russian Liberation Army S. K.

Bunyachenko. The Russian Liberation Army (ROA), formed by General A. A. Vlasov, who went over to the side of the Nazis, from Soviet soldiers and officers captured by the Germans, at that time, fearing to be in the hands of the Soviet command, moved west and was 50 km southwest Prague When Czech officers approached the command of the ROA with a proposal of cooperation, S.K. Bunyachenko and almost all the commanders of the regiments of the division, counting on political asylum in Czechoslovakia, agreed to an alliance with the Czechs in the fight against "Nazism and Bolshevism". A. Vlasov did not believe in success, but gave the division commander complete freedom of action (5). On May

1, the 1st Ukrainian Front received the task of transferring the line along the Elbe to the 1st Belorussian Front no later than May 4, and the released forces were rapidly thrown to Prague . The next day, the same task was assigned to the 2nd Ukrainian Front, using the success of the 4th Ukrainian Front. As a result, three Ukrainian fronts were supposed to surround and destroy the enemy in Czechoslovakia. Soviet troops and the 2nd Polish, 1st and 4th Romanian

armies and the Czechoslovak army corps operating with them numbered more than 2 million personnel, 30.5 thousand guns and mortars, about 2 thousand tanks and self-propelled artillery installations, more than 3 thousand combat aircraft (6). They excelled

Germans in personnel more than two times, in artillery and aviation three times, tanks were equally divided. Such superiority did not portend an easy success, but the nature of the enemy's actions was now determined not so much by the balance of forces and means, but by the critical situation of Germany and the unrest in the army that began after receiving information about the battles in

Berlin. The German leadership also made a certain bet on Czechoslovakia. According to the plan of the new "government" of Germany, hastily formed after the suicide of A. Hitler, headed by Grand Admiral K. Doenitz (formerly Commander-in-Chief of the Navy), the group of troops located in Czechoslovakia was supposed to hold the occupied areas as long as possible, creating a front to the east and opening the front from the west. For contacts with the allies, relations were already established with the American command. This is confirmed with particular clarity by the materials of the meeting of the German "government" on May 3, 1945. It was decided to urgently carry out the following measures: - to try to defuse the

internal political situation in Czechoslovakia by declaring Prague an open city;
- try foreign policy opportunities by sending to D. Eisenhower one German and one Czech representative.

At the same time, the new "government" of Germany did not allow the possibility of capitulation of the grouping of its troops in Czechoslovakia under the pressure of Russian weapons, believing that "in this case, all of

it will be in the power of the Russians" (7). British Prime Minister W. Churchill was extremely worried about the spread of communism in Europe. On April 30, he wrote to the new US President Truman: "There can be little doubt that the liberation by your troops of Prague and as much of Western Czechoslovakia as possible can completely change the post-war situation in Czechoslovakia and may well affect neighboring countries by that time" (8). And in early May, Churchill continued to insist on the advance of American troops to the capital of Czechoslovakia. However, Truman considered it unacceptable to interfere in the military plans of Eisenhower, who nevertheless made an attempt to probe the possibility of an attack on Prague.

On May 4, D. Eisenhower sent a message to the Chief of the General Staff of the Red Army. Confirming the previously agreed line of his advance in Czechoslovakia, he added about the probable withdrawal of American troops to the river. Vltava, which meant the mastery of the Left-Bank Prague. General Antonov could not agree with this, because the Soviet troops were already completing the preparations for the Prague operation. In his opinion, a sudden change in the line of meeting with the American troops threatened with danger: an offensive by the allied armies towards each other could lead to

casualties. Another white flag The argument was undoubtedly important. But the main thing here was the unspoken political motivation: Czechoslovakia, according to the ideas of the Soviet leadership about the national-state interests of the USSR, was part of its sphere of interests. Therefore, no less than Churchill, who insisted that American troops enter Prague first, the Soviet leaders were interested in the liberation of the Czechoslovak capital by the Red Army. General D. Eisenhower took into account the considerations set out in Antonov's telegram, and on May 6 ordered the commander of the 12th Army Group, General O. Bradley, not to advance further than the Ceske Budejovice, Plzen, Karlovy Vary line. In a telegram sent to Antonov, Eisenhower wrote: "I believe that Soviet troops can quickly go on the offensive and defeat enemy forces in the center of the country" (9). The operation of the

1st and 2nd

Ukrainian fronts was scheduled to begin on May 7th. The 4th Ukrainian Front continued the offensive, pursuing the enemy who had begun to withdraw. But

events did not turn out quite the way the politicians wanted. In early May 1945, anti-Nazi demonstrations arose in a number of cities in the Czech Republic, which developed into the May Uprising of the Czech people. Soviet historians argued that it began spontaneously. But behind all this "spontaneity" the hand of an experienced leader was clearly visible. On May 5,

Prague revolted. Before that, rumors were spread among the inhabitants about the preparation of the city for destruction, in the city itself, previously prepared warehouses of small arms were unexpectedly opened. The desire to save the city from destruction made

tens of thousands of citizens take to the streets. They not only erected hundreds of barricades, but also seized the central post office, telegraph, railway stations, and the

most

important bridges across the Vltava. Then the rebels, having captured a number of military depots and disarmed several small German units stationed in Prague, established control over a significant part of the city. On the very first day, the positions of the Nazis in Prague were seriously weakened. As a representative of the revolutionary movement of the Czech people and as a trusted organ of the government of the Czechoslovak Republic, the CNS assumed legislative and executive power in the

territory of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia. However, the CHNS still did not coordinate with the Soviet command and did not even establish contact with it. The Council, about which practically nothing was known, was not trusted either by the Soviet command, which saw in it a protegee of London, or by the Czechoslovak government, which acted on the liberated territory of the country. Field

Marshal F. Scherner, Commander of Army Group ^Center, ordered the suppression of the uprising, which cut off the main route of the planned German retreat to the west. On May 6, the Nazis, using tank units and aircraft against the insurgents, again captured part of cities.

The rebels, suffering heavy losses, turned to the Allies for help by radio. As I. S. Konev recalled, "at the same time, m ^ 1 received intelligence information that General Field Marshal Scherner was hastily pulling troops to Prague. On May 5, I gave the order to the troops of the shock group to launch an offensive on the morning of May 6"(10).

Caught in a difficult situation and not knowing how soon military assistance would come from the Allies, the ChNS, to which the command of ^ (Bartosh) now obeyed, was forced to agree to cooperate with the Vlasovites. On May 6, the division of S. K. Bunyachenko entered Prague. went into battle against yesterday's allies under the slogans: "Death to Hitler!", "Death to Stalin!". By evening, they captured the western districts of the city. The next day, units of the division crossed to the right bank and cut through the forces

German troops into two parts.

Broken equipment on the streets of Berlin In relation to the new allies, there was no unity in the leadership of the uprising. The CHNS, after certain hesitation and under pressure from the communists, refused further negotiations with the "Vlasovites" and from their help, realizing that such an "alliance" would certainly be negatively perceived by the Soviet authorities and command (11). Envoys of the ChNS who arrived at Bunyachenko's headquarters brought a letter of thanks to General Vlasov

behind

provided assistance and reported the decision of the Council to refuse the services of his

army. S.K. Bunyachenko was ready to act against the Germans and separately from the CHNS. Now he asked the Czechs to broadcast his memorandum on the radio, explaining why he ended up in the ROA, why he came to the aid of Prague and now will continue to fight against the Nazis. But representatives of the CHNS refused to comply with this requirement.

Realizing that the American troops were not going to attack Prague and that parts of the Red Army would enter it, the division of S.K. Bunyachenko on the evening of May 7 began to leave the fighting city, now leaving to the west, to the Americans. The Vlasovites did not heed the requests of the rebels to leave them weapons. However, part of the fighters of the division remained in Prague and continued to fight. There is no doubt that among the Vlasovites there were people who sincerely wanted to fight the Nazis and thereby receive the forgiveness of the Motherland. In total, in the battles for the city, according to some sources, about 300 Vlasovites died. With

the departure of S.K. Bunyachenko's division to the west, the Germans again became masters of the situation in Prague. Their detachments, using heavy weapons and military equipment, crushed the centers of resistance of the townspeople one after another. The situation became critical.

The 1st Ukrainian Front attacked Prague from the north through the Ore Mountains. In the early morning of May 6, reconnaissance established that the enemy did not have time to create a continuous defense. In the afternoon, the rifle divisions of the 13th and 3rd armies, together with formations of the 3rd and 4th guards tank armies, dealt a powerful and sudden blow to the weakest places in the German defense. The 5th Guards Army managed to complete preparations for the offensive only in the evening, when

the main forces of the front had already broken through the enemy defenses and, despite the heavy rains that made it difficult to move along the wet roads, moved more than 20 km. On May 6,

Field Marshal Scherner's troops began a general withdrawal from the territory of Czechoslovakia. On the same day, the 40,000-strong garrison of the fortress city of Breslau, which had been blocked since mid-February, ceased resistance; he surrendered, convinced of the futility of further struggle in the rear of the Soviet troops. Marshal I.S. Konev ordered

all armies to immediately pursue the enemy. On May 7, the offensive of the troops of the 1st Ukrainian Front unfolded in a strip of more than 400 km. By the end of the day, the main shock grouping of the front reached the northern spurs of the Ore Mountains. The 13th Army of General N.P. Pukhov achieved particular success. Acting in conjunction with the 4th Guards Tank Army, she significantly pulled ahead. The 5th Guards and 3rd Guards Tank Armies of Generals A.S. Zhadov and P.S. Rybalko, having started battles for Dresden,

lagged behind.

On May 7, the 2nd Ukrainian Front also launched an offensive against Prague. His 7th Guards Army under the command of General M.S. Shumilov immediately advanced 12 km. Using its success, the front commander, Marshal R. Ya. Malinovsky, the next day, brought the 6th Guards Tank Army of General A. G. Kravchenko into battle, which rushed to the capital of Czechoslovakia. On the afternoon of May 7,

Field Marshal F. Scherner

received on the radio an order from Field Marshal Keitel to surrender German troops on all fronts. But Scherner was already hatching his own plans and did not bring the received order to his subordinates. Later, while in Soviet captivity, he justified himself: "I did not transfer the order to surrender to my troops, since I believed that it was impossible to carry out^ We worked out a plan for the withdrawal of troops of Army Group ^Center in stages." Speaking like this, Hitler's field marshal was simply being cunning. He gave the order, but it said that Anglo-American and Soviet

propaganda were spreading the rumors of surrender. Scherner assured the troops that "the war against the Soviet Union will continue" (12). Essentially, this position is

not the willfulness of the field marshal, but a reflection of the official point of view of the new leadership of

Germany. May 7 was the hardest day for the insurgents in Prague. It was then that American officers arrived at the headquarters of General K. Kutlvashr, who announced the German

surrender and advised to stop the fighting in Prague. And at night it became known that the head of the German garrison in Prague, General R. Toussaint, was ready to enter into negotiations with leadership of the capitulation uprising.

These negotiations began on May 8 at 10 am. At 4 pm, representatives of the National Council, on the one hand, and on the other, General R. Toussaint, signed the act of surrender of the German garrison. According to the protocol, the German troops were free to withdraw to the west, leaving heavy weapons at the exit from Prague, and laying down the rest in front of the American demarcation line (13).

Later, Soviet and Czech historians claimed that the implementation of this agreement allowed part of the Nazi forces to escape Soviet captivity. By agreeing to such conditions, which bear little resemblance to the surrender of the enemy, the rebels simply sought to quickly get rid of the invaders and avoid further bloodshed. In fact, it was nothing more than a well-thought-out political act that had its own

consequences.

Victory!

May 7 and 9 became the decisive days of the offensive of the Soviet troops to Prague. The troops of the right wing of the 1st Ukrainian Front overcame enemy resistance at the passes through the Ore Mountains. At dawn on May 9, the advanced units of the 3rd and 4th Guards Tank armies broke into Prague. In the afternoon, advanced units of the 60th and 38th armies of the 4th Ukrainian Front entered the city from the east. Within a few hours, the city was cleared of the remnants of German troops. The main forces ^ 1 of the army group ^ Center "were surrounded and by the end of May 11 surrendered. On May 10, Soviet troops reached the areas of Chemnitz, Pilsen and Ceske Budejovice and established contact with the allies. The next day they met in Karlovy Vary and south of Pilsen in Klatovy.

Prague Offensive Operation Advancing to the Klatovy area, reconnaissance of the 25th tank corps of General E.I. Fominykh established that the division of S.K. To capture it, Fominykh singled out a group led by Captain M.I. Yakushev. As the head of the political department of the 1st Ukrainian Front, General F.V. Yashechkin, reported to Moscow, on May 12, General A.A. Vlasov was captured by tankers of the 25th Tank Corps. An American passport in his name, an old party card and a copy of his order to the troops to lay down their arms and surrender to the Red Army were found on him. According to the testimony of A. A. Vlasov himself, "he intended to get into the territory,

occupied by our allies" (14). The enemy is

defeated The division of S. K. Bunyachenko, who approached the line occupied by

the Americans, was not accepted by the Allied command. After that, the division commander in his heart tore off the shoulder straps of the German major general and dismissed the personnel. Some officers and soldiers immediately shot themselves, others listlessly sank to the side of the road, others headed east, towards the Soviet troops. On May 13 and 14, in the area of the city of Pilsen, "up to 20 thousand Vlasovites laid down their arms and surrendered to us." A. A. Vlasov and his henchmen in Moscow were waiting for the court and the gallows, and ordinary soldiers and junior many

years of camps.

Home! The Prague operation was successfully completed. As a result of the hostilities, the Army Group Center was defeated, about 860 thousand soldiers and officers were taken prisoner, 9.5 thousand guns and mortars, 1.8 thousand tanks and assault guns, more than a thousand combat aircraft (15). The losses of Soviet, Romanian, Polish and Czechoslovak troops in this operation amounted to 12 thousand people, more than 40 thousand soldiers and officers were injured. In addition, 373 tanks and self-propelled artillery mounts, a thousand guns and mortars, 80 combat aircraft (16) were lost.

Notes

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Conclusion

The year 1945 occupies a special place in the history of World War II. In a campaign that lasted a little over four months, Soviet troops, together with the armies of the allies, completed the defeat of the fascist troops, coming victorious to a number of countries in Eastern and Central Europe. It is characteristic that this year the opposing sides put up the largest number of forces and means in the entire war: 18 million people, about 260 thousand guns and mortars, up to 40 thousand tanks and self-propelled artillery installations (assault guns), over 38 thousand aircraft. This is the best evidence of the intensity of the armed struggle that took place on the fronts. The victory of the Soviet troops over an experienced and treacherous

enemy was won as a result of the simultaneous conduct of strategic operations in the strip from the Baltic Sea to the Drava River. They attacked continuously until the complete defeat of the enemy, as a result of which 98 enemy divisions were destroyed, 56 divisions were captured, and another 93 divisions were forced to lay down their arms in connection with the Act of Unconditional Surrender.

As a result of intense fighting, Soviet troops only from January 12 to May 8, 1945 traveled over 800 km - from the line of the Vistula River to the Elbe, captured East Prussia, East and West Pomerania, half of Germany and Berlin. They liberated Poland and Czechoslovakia, captured Hungary and part of Austria. The successes of Soviet weapons became a decisive factor in the liberation of the Yugoslav and Albanian peoples.

1945 was a triumph of Soviet military art. In offensive operations, the highest rates of troop advancement were achieved. The development of tactical success into operational success was carried out by tank armies, which advanced an average of 20-40 km per day, and on some days 50-60 and even 100 km. Such rates made it possible to reach the flanks of the retreating enemy groupings and carry out their encirclement.

The Soviet command widely used such a method of defeating the enemy as encirclement. In 1945, out of 10 offensive operations planned by the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command, 7 were encirclement. It should be noted that the Anglo-American troops for 1944-1945. conducted only two encirclement

operations. Methods of encirclement and liquidation of encircled enemy groupings were constantly improved. A mobile outer front of the encirclement, strong in composition, was created. A reliable air blockade of the encircled troops was organized. The encirclement maneuver in most cases was combined with the dismemberment of the enemy grouping into parts. The destruction of the encircled group began without an operational

pause. Despite the toughest forms of struggle, the Soviet command always sought to avoid unnecessary bloodshed and offered the encircled enemy troops to voluntarily lay down their arms. However, the fascist command resorted to capitulation only in the most exceptional cases. As a result of this, the operations at the final stage of the war were characterized by heavy casualties for both sides, as well as significant losses among the civilian population of cities turned by the Nazis into fortresses. In general, the final year of the Great Patriotic

War was

not only the year of the Great Victory over fascism, but also the year of the complete triumph of the Red Army and Soviet military art. This was then recognized by all countries of the world and became one of the reasons for dividing it into two camps. Subsequently, this partition led to decades of the Cold War, which undermined the strength of the Soviet Union and ended with its collapse.

At present, completely different moods prevail in Eastern and Central Europe, and few people remember the great role of the Soviet Union and its Armed Forces in the defeat of German, Austrian and Hungarian fascism. Monuments to Soviet soldiers-liberators are demolished, mass graves are overgrown with grass. A new era of new values has come. Despite this, the first

half of the forties of the XX century. cannot be erased from the history of mankind. In each of the countries of Europe, many people are still alive who have experienced all the hardships

World War II and the horrors of the fascist occupation. They pass on their memories to their children and grandchildren, they bring them to the screens of films and to the pages of books. As long as all these people are alive and as long as young people read books, the memory of the Great Patriotic War is immortal.

Applications

ORDER THE SUPREME COMMANDER OF THE TROOPS
OF THE ARMY IN THE ACTIVITY The

troops of the 1st Ukrainian Front and the Anglo-American troops allied to us cut through the front of the German troops with a blow from the east and west and on April 25 at 13:30 they united in the center of Germany, near the city of Torgau. Thus, the German troops stationed in Northern Germany are cut off from the German troops in the southern regions of Germany. In

commemoration of the victory won and in honor of this historic event, today, April 27, at 7 pm, the capital of our Motherland, Moscow, on behalf of the Motherland, salutes the valiant troops of the 1st Ukrainian Front and the Anglo-American troops allied to us with twenty-four artillery volleys from three hundred and twenty-four guns. Long live the victory of the freedom-loving

peoples over Germany! The Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet Union ***I. Stalin on April 27, 1945*** was an order of the Supreme

Commander-in-Chief

of the Red Army and the Navy of the 1st Belorussian Front under the command of the Marshal of the Soviet Union Zhukov with the assistance of the troops of the 1st Ukrainian Front under the command of the Marshal of the Soviet Union Konev, after stubborn street fighting, completed the defeat of the Berlin group of German troops and today, May 2, completely captured the capital of Germany, the city of Berlin - the center of German imperialism and the center of German aggression. The Berlin garrison defending the city, led by the chief of defense of Berlin, General of Artillery Weidling and his

headquarters today at 15 o'clock stopped resistance, laid down their arms and surrendered.

On May 2, by 9 pm, our troops captured 70,000 German soldiers and officers in the city of Berlin. In the battles for the capture of Berlin, the troops of Army General Sokolovsky, Colonel General Kuznetsov, Colonel General Chuikov, Colonel General Berzarin, Lieutenant General Luchinsky, Lieutenant General Perkhovich, Lieutenant General Lukyanchenko, Colonel General Cherevichenko, Lieutenant General Kazankin distinguished themselves in the battles for the capture of Berlin, Lieutenant General Glazunov, Lieutenant General Ryzhov, Lieutenant General Zherebin, Lieutenant General Rosly, Lieutenant General Tereshkov, Lieutenant General Andreev, Major General Bakshtynovich, Major General Belyavsky, Major General Kushchev, Major General Barinov, Major General Perevertkin

Major General Rogachevsky, Major General Batitsky, Major General Shvarev, Major General Firsov, Major General Artillery Khetagurov, Major General Shatilov, Major General Shafarenko, Major General Smirnov, Major General Kozin, Major

General Karapetyan, Major General Krasilnikov, Major General Shugaev, Major General Zalizyuk, Major General Stankevsky, Major General Pankov, Major General Glebov,

Major General Bakanov, Major General Duka, Major General Seryugin, Major General Gasparyan, General Major Sokolov, Major General Dorofeev, Major General Syzranov, Major General Galai, Major General Shkrylev,

Major General Safaryan, Major General Vydrigin, Major General Bevzyuk, Major

General Myshkin, Major General Korchikov, Major General Turchinsky, Major General Vekhin, Colonel Antonov, Colonel Ivanov, Colonel Gervasiev, Colonel Solovyov, Colonel Shishkov, General Major Fomichenko, Colonel Smolin, Colonel Vorobyov, Colonel Marchenko, Colonel Negoda, Colonel Asafov, Colonel Shatsky, Colonel Rybalka; tankers of Colonel-General of Tank Troops Bogdanov, Colonel-General of Tank Troops Katukov, Colonel-General Rybalko, Colonel-General Lelyushenko, Colonel-General of Tank Troops Novikov, Lieutenant General of Tank Troops Orel, Lieutenant General Radzievsky, Lieutenant General of Tank Troops Krivoshein, lieutenant general of tank troops Sukhov, general

Lieutenant of the Tank Forces Belov, Lieutenant General Shalin, Major General of the Tank Forces Bakhmetyev, Major General of the Tank Forces Upman, Major General of the Tank Forces Salminov, Major General of the Tank Forces Stogniy, Major General Dremov, Lieutenant General of the Tank Forces Kirichenko, General Major General of the Tank Troops Yushchuk, Major General of the Tank Troops Mitrofanov, Major General of the Tank Troops Weinrub, Major General of the Tank Troops Anisimov, Colonel Nikolaev, Colonel Babadzhanyan; artillerymen of Colonel General of Artillery Kazakov, Colonel General of Artillery Varentsov, Lieutenant General of Artillery Shamshin, Lieutenant General of Artillery Pozharsky, Lieutenant General of Artillery Ignatov, Lieutenant General of Artillery Rozhanovich, Lieutenant General of Artillery Kozhukhov, Major General of Artillery Morozov, Major General of Artillery Kosenko, Major General of Artillery Plaskov, Major General of Artillery Frolov, Major General of Artillery Likhachev, Major General of Artillery Snegurov, Major General of Artillery Lebedovsky, Major General of Artillery Koznov,

Major General of Artillery Bryukhanov, Major General of Artillery Shlepin,

Major General of Artillery Bogdanov, Artillery major general Seredin, Major General

of Artillery Kamensky, Major General of Artillery Polosukhin, Major General of Artillery

Petropavlovsky, Major General of Artillery Nikolsky, Major General of Artillery Montyukov, Major General of Artillery Dobrinsky, Major General of Artillery Krasnokutsky, Colonel Fantalov, Colonel Pasko, Colonel Korchagin, Colonel Overchenko, Colonel Lyubimov; ships and units of the Red Banner Dnieper Flotilla of Rear Admiral Grigoriev, Captain 1st Rank Lyalko; pilots of Chief Marshal of Aviation Novikov, Chief Marshal of Aviation Golovanov, Colonel General of Aviation Rudenko, Colonel General of Aviation Krasovsky, Lieutenant General of Aviation Savitsky, Lieutenant General of Aviation Beletsky, Lieutenant General of Aviation Tulikov, Lieutenant General of Aviation Loginov, Lieutenant General of Aviation Counter, Lieutenant General of Aviation Nestertsev,

Lieutenant General of Aviation Ryazanov, Lieutenant General of Aviation Utin, Major General of Aviation Tokarev, Major General of Aviation Krupsky, Major General of Aviation Karavatsky, Major General of Aviation Skok, Major General of Aviation Sidnev, Major General of Aviation Dzusov, Major General of Aviation Slyusarev, Major General of Aviation Zyubaluev, Major General of Aviation Arkhangelsky, Colonel Nikishin, Colonel Stalin, Colonel Pokryshkin, Major General of Aviation Komarov, Colonel Alexandrovich; sappers Colonel General of the Engineering Troops Proshlyakov, Colonel General of the Engineering Troops Galitsky, Major General of the Engineering Troops Maryin, Major General of the Engineering Troops Tkachenko, Major General of the Fursa Engineering Troops, Major General of the Engineer Troops Kharchevin, Major General of the Engineer Troops of Kirov, Colonel Velsky, Colonel Kamenchuk, Colonel Poluektov; Signalmen Lieutenant General of the Signal Corps Maksimenko, Lieutenant General of the Signal Corps Bulychev, Major General of the Signal Corps Akimov, Colonel Cherkasov, Colonel Falin, Colonel Smolii, Colonel Zakharov, Colonel Plotkin, Colonel Borisov, Colonel Ostrenko, Lieutenant Colonel of State Security Grib. In commemoration of the victory, the formations and units that distinguished themselves most in the battles for the capture of Berlin are to be

presented for the assignment of the name "Berlin" and for the awarding of orders. Today, May 2, at 11:30 p.m., in honor of the historic event - the capture of Berlin by Soviet troops - the capital of our Motherland, Moscow, on behalf of the Motherland, salutes the valiant troops of the 1st Belorussian and 1st Ukrainian fronts with twenty-four artillery volleys from three hundred and twenty-four guns.

For excellent military operations, I express gratitude to the troops of the 1st Belorussian and

1st Ukrainian fronts, which participated in the battles for the capture of Berlin.

Eternal glory to the heroes who fell in the battles for the freedom and independence

of our Motherland! Death to the

German invaders! Supreme

Commander-in-Chief ***Marshal of the Soviet Union I. Stalin***

May 2, 1945

ACT OF MILITARY SURRENDER 1. We, the undersigned, acting on behalf of the German High Command, agree to the unconditional surrender of all our armed forces on land, at sea and in the air, as well as the forces now under German command, to the High Command of the Red Army and at the same time the High Command of the Allied Expeditionary Forces.

2. The German High Command will immediately issue orders to all German commanders of the land, sea and air forces and to all forces under German command to cease hostilities at 23.00 CET on May 8, 1945, to remain in their places where they are at this time. time, and disarm completely, handing over all their weapons and military equipment to local Allied commanders or officers assigned by representatives of the Allied High Command, not to destroy or cause any damage to steamships, ships and aircraft, their engines, hulls and equipment, as well as vehicles, weapons, apparatuses and all military-technical means of warfare in general. 3. The German High Command will immediately assign appropriate commanders and ensure that all further orders issued by the Supreme High Command of the Red Army and the High Command of the Allied

expeditionary forces.

4. This act shall not prevent its replacement by another general instrument of surrender, concluded by or on behalf of the United Nations, applicable to Germany and the German armed forces as a whole. 5. In the event that the German High Command

or any armed forces under its command fail to act in accordance with this act of surrender, the High Command of the Red Army, as well as the High Command of the Allied Expeditionary Forces, will also take punitive measures or other actions they deem necessary.

6. This act is drawn up in Russian, English and German. Only Russian and English texts are authentic. Signed on May 8, 1945 in Berlin. On behalf of the German High

Command **Keitel, Friedenburg, Stumpf** in the presence of:

under the
authority of the Supreme High Command of the Red Army Marshal of the Soviet Union **G.**

Zhukov under the authority of the Supreme Command of the Allied Expeditionary Force Air Chief Marshal **Tedder** Also

present as witnesses at the signing were: Commander of the US Strategic Armed Forces General **Spaatz**

Commander-in-Chief of the French Army, General **Delattre de Tassigny** ORDER OF THE SUPREME COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE RED ARMY AND NAVY On May 8, 1945, representatives of the German High Command signed the Act of unconditional surrender of the German armed forces in Berlin. The Great Patriotic War waged by the Soviet people against the

Nazi invaders has ended victoriously. Germany is completely destroyed.

Comrades of the Red Army, Red Navy, sergeants, foremen, officers of the army and navy, generals, admirals and marshals, I congratulate you on the victorious end of the Great Patriotic War.

In commemoration of the complete victory over Germany, today, May 9, on Victory Day, at 10 p.m., the capital of our Motherland, Moscow, salutes the valiant troops of the Red Army, ships and units of the Navy that won this brilliant victory, with thirty artillery salvos from a thousand guns. Eternal glory to the heroes

who fell in the battles for the freedom and independence of our Motherland! Long live the victorious Red Army and Navy! Supreme Commander-in-Chief

Marshal of the Soviet Union I. Stalin May 9, 1945

List of the high command of the Red Army who took part in the operations

Budapest Operation 2nd

Ukrainian Front

Malinovsky R. Ya. - front commander, Marshal of the Soviet Union.

Zhmachenko F.F. - Commander of the 40th Army, Lieutenant General.

Trofimenko S.G. - Commander of the 27th Army, Lieutenant General.

Managarov I.M. - Commander of the 53rd Army, Lieutenant General.

Shumilov M. S. - Commander of the 7th Guards Army, General
colonel.

Shlemin I. T. - Commander of the 46th Army.

Kravchenko A.G. - Commander of the 6th Guards Tank Army,
Colonel General of the Tank Troops.

Pliev I. A. - commander of the cavalry-mechanized group, lieutenant
general. Gorshkov S. I. - Commander of the Cavalry Mechanized Group,
Lieutenant General. Goryunov S.K. - Commander of the 5th Air Army,
Colonel General of Aviation. 3rd Ukrainian Front Tolbukhin F.I. - front
commander, Marshal of
the Soviet Union. Shlemin I. T. - Commander of the 46th Army (until

01/16/45), Lieutenant General. Filippovsky M.S. - Commander of the 46th
Army (since 01/16/45), Major General.

Zakharov G.F. - Commander of the 4th Guards Army, General of the
Army.

Sharokhin M.N. - Commander of the 57th Army, Lieutenant General.

Skvirsky L. S. - Commander of the 26th Army (until 01/27/45),
Lieutenant General.

Gagen N. A. - Commander of the 26th Army
(since 01/30/45), Lieutenant General.

Sudets V. A. - Commander of the 17th Air Army, Colonel General of Aviation.

East Prussian operation 3rd Belorussian Front

Chernyakhovsky I.D. - front commander (until 20.02.45),
army General.

Vasilevsky A.M. - Front Commander (from 20.02.45), Marshal of the Soviet Union. Lyudnikov I. N. - Commander of the 39th Army, Lieutenant General. Krylov I.N.

- Commander of the 5th Army, Colonel General. Luchinsky A. A.

- Commander of the 28th Army, Major General. Shafranov P.G. -

Commander of the 31st Army, Lieutenant General. Chanchibadze

P.G. - Commander of the 2nd Guards Army, Lieutenant General.

Galitsky K.I. -

Commander of the 11th Guards Army, Colonel General. Khryukin T.

T. - Commander of

the 1st Air Army, General

aviation colonel. 2nd

Belorussian Front

Rokossovsky K.K. - front commander, Marshal of the Soviet Union.

Boldin

I.V. - Commander of the 50th Army (until
3.02.45), Lieutenant General.

Ozerov F. P. - Commander of the 50th Army
(since 3.02.45), Lieutenant

General. Grishin I. T. - Commander of the 49th Army, Colonel

General. Gorbатов A.V. - Commander of the 3rd Army, Colonel

General. Gusev N.I. - Commander of the 48th Army, Lieutenant

General. Fedyuninsky I.I. - commander of the 2nd shock army,
lieutenant

general. Batov P.I. - Commander of the 65th Army, Colonel

General. Popov V.S. - Commander of the 70th Army, Colonel

General. Volsky V. T. - Commander of the 5th Guards Tank Army (until
03/16/45),

Colonel General of the Tank Forces.

Sinenko M.D. - Commander of the 5th Guards Tank Army (since
03/16/45),

Major General of Tank Forces.

Vershinin K. A. - Commander of the 4th Air Army, General aviation colonel. 1st Baltic Front Bagramyan I. X. - front commander, general of the army. Beloborodov A.P. - Commander of the 43rd Army, Lieutenant General. Papivnin N.F. - Commander of the 3rd Air Army, General aviation colonel. Berlin operation 1st Belorussian Front Zhukov G.K. - front commander, Marshal of the Soviet Union. Belov P. A. - Commander of the 61st Army, Colonel General. Poplavsky S. - Commander of the 1st Polish Army, Lieutenant General. Perkhorovich F.I. - Commander of the 47th Army. Kuznetsov V.I. - commander of the 3rd shock army, general colonel, lieutenant general. Berzarin N. E. - commander of the 5th shock army, general colonel. Chuikov V.I. - Commander of the 8th Guards Army, General colonel. Kolpakchi V. Ya. - Commander of the 69th Army, Colonel General. Gorbатов A.V. - Commander of the 3rd Army, Colonel General. Katukov M.E. - Commander of the 1st Guards Tank Army, Colonel General of the Tank Troops. Bogdanov S.I. - Commander of the 2nd Guards Tank Army, Colonel General of the Tank Troops. Rudenko S.I. - Commander of the 16th Air Army, General colonel. 1st Ukrainian Front Konev I. S. - front commander, Marshal of the Soviet Union. Gordov V.N. - Commander of the 3rd Guards Army, General colonel. Luchinsky A. A. - Commander of the 28th Army, Lieutenant General. Pukhov N.P. - Commander of the 13th Army, Colonel General. Zhadov A. S. - Commander of the 5th Guards Army, General colonel. Sverchevsky K. - Commander of the 2nd Polish Army, Lieutenant General. Koroteev K. A. - Commander of the 52nd Army, Colonel General.

Rybalko P. S. - Commander of the 3rd Guards Tank Army,
Marshal of the Armored Troops.

Lelyushenko D.D. - Commander of the 4th Guards Tank Army,
Colonel General. Krasovsky

S. A. - Commander of the 2nd Air Army, Colonel General of Aviation.

Biographical information about the highest command staff of the Red Army, who took part in the encirclement operations of 1945

Antonov Alexei Innokent'evich

(15(27).09.1896-18.06.1962)

Born in the family of a captain. After graduating from the gymnasium, he entered the Petrograd University, but did not finish his studies. In 1916 he was drafted into the army and completed an accelerated course at the Pavlovsk Military School. Member of the First World War, platoon commander, for military distinctions near Kalush was awarded the Order of St. Anna 4th degree with swords and a bow.

In April 1919 he was drafted into the Red Army. Member of the Civil War: assistant chief of staff of the brigade. Member of the battles near Lugansk, Rostov-on-Don, for Perekop and Crimea. Awarded with an honorary weapon of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic.

In the interwar years, from 1922, the head of the operational department of the headquarters of the corps, then the chief of staff of the rifle division. In 1931 he graduated from the command department, in 1933 - from the operational department of the MV Frunze Military Academy, in 1937 - from the Military Academy of the General Staff. In 1937-1940. - Chief of Staff of the Moscow Military District, Deputy Head of the General Tactics Department of the M. V. Frunze Military Academy, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Kyiv Military District, Major General. With the beginning of

the Great Patriotic War - Chief of Staff of the Kyiv Military District, from August 27 - Chief of Staff of the Southern Front. For a successful counter-offensive near Rostov, he was awarded the Order of the Red Banner and promoted to the rank of lieutenant general. From July 28, 1942 - Chief of Staff of the North Caucasian Front. On December 11, 1942, he was appointed head of the Operations Directorate - Deputy Chief of the General Staff, General

colonel. From May 1943 - First Deputy Chief of the General Staff, General of the Army. From February 1945 - Chief of the General Staff. One of the participants in the development of plans for the Belarusian, Berlin operations, the Soviet-Japanese war. Head of military experts at the Yalta and Potsdam conferences. In the post-war years - Commander of the Transcaucasian

Military District, Chief of Staff of the Joint Armed Forces of the states - members of the Warsaw Pact. Cavalier of twelve orders of the USSR, including the Orders of Victory, Suvorov and Kutuzov 1st degree. He died on June 18, 1962. The ashes were buried in the Kremlin

wall.

Bagramyan Ivan Khristoforovich
(20.11 (2.12) 1897-21.09.1982)

was born in the city of Elisavetpol (Azerbaijan) in the family of a railway worker. Educated at the Tiflis Railway Technical School (1915).

Soon he was drafted into the army. Member of the First World War: squadron commander

of the 1st Armenian cavalry regiment, lieutenant. In 1918-1920. served in the troops of the Dashnak Armenian

Republic. In the Red Army since December 1920. Since 1923 - commander of the cavalry regiment of the Armenian Rifle Division. In 1925 and 1931 graduated from advanced training courses for commanding staff, in 1934 - the Military Academy named after M.V. Frunze, in 1938 - the Military Academy of the General Staff. He served as chief of staff of a cavalry division, senior lecturer at the Military Academy of the General Staff. Since 1940 - head of the operational department of the army headquarters, then the Kyiv Special Military District.

During the Great Patriotic War - Deputy Chief of Staff of the Southwestern Front, Chief of Staff of the Southwestern Direction, from July 1942 - Commander of the 16th Army of the Western Front, from November 1943 - Commander of the Forces

1st Baltic Front, then Zemland operational group, troops of the 3rd Belorussian Front, army general.

In the postwar years - Commander of the Baltic Military District, Deputy Minister of Defense, Head of the Military

Academy of the General Staff, Chief of Logistics of the Armed Forces of the USSR, since 1955 - Marshal of the Soviet Union. Since 1968 - in the Group of General Inspectors of the USSR Ministry of Defense.

Twice Hero of the Soviet Union (1944, 1977). Cavalier of seven Orders of Lenin, the Order of the October Revolution, three Orders of the Red Banner, two Orders of Suvorov 1st Class and the Order of Kutuzov 1st Class, "For Service to the Motherland in the Armed Forces of the USSR"

3rd Class. Author of seven books of memoirs, a number of monographs and articles in

military journals. Died September 21, 1982 in Moscow, buried on Krasnaya square near the Kremlin wall.

Batov Pavel Ivanovich

(May 20 (June 1), 1897-April

19, 1985) Was born in the village of Filisovo, Yaroslavl province. In military service since 1915. During the First World War, he fought on the Southwestern Front, private, scout, awarded two St. George's crosses and two medals. Since 1918 - in the Red Army, a

participant in the Civil War: assistant to the military commissar, commander of the detachment. Participated in the suppression of uprisings in Rybinsk, Yaroslavl, Poshekhonye.

In 1927 he graduated from the courses "Shot", in 1936 - the Military Academy named after M.V. Frunze. Head of a regimental school, commander of a rifle battalion, rifle regiment. In 1936-1937. - military adviser in Spain. Awarded the Order of Lenin. brigade commander Since the summer of 1937 - the commander of the rifle corps. For the skillful leadership of the troops and personal courage in the Soviet-Finnish war, he was awarded the Order of the Red Banner. From February 1940 he was Deputy Commander of the Transcaucasian Military District, Major

General. With the beginning of the Great Patriotic War - commander of the 9th Rifle Corps in the Crimea, then deputy commander of the 51st Army of the Southern Front, commander of the 3rd Army, assistant commander of the Bryansk Front, lieutenant general. From October 1942 until the end of the war - commander of the 65th Army. Member of the battles of the initial period of the war, the defense of Odessa and Sevastopol, the battles near Moscow, Stalingrad and Kursk,

Belarusian, Vistula-Oder, East Pomeranian and Berlin operations, Colonel General. The troops under the command of P. I. Batov distinguished themselves in the battles of Stalingrad and Kursk, in the battle for the Dnieper, in the battles for the liberation of Belarus, in the Vistula-Oder and Berlin

operations. In the post-war years, he graduated from the Higher Academic Courses at the Military Academy of the General Staff. Commander of the combined arms and mechanized armies, then the troops of the Carpathian (1955-1958) and Baltic (1958-1959) military districts. Since 1965 - General of the Army, Chief of Staff of the Joint Armed Forces of the Warsaw Pact countries. Since 1968 - military inspector of the Group of General Inspectors of the USSR Ministry of Defense.

Twice Hero of the Soviet Union. Cavalier of twenty orders of the USSR, including eight orders of Lenin, three orders of the Red Banner, Suvorov 1st degree, Kutuzov 1st degree, Bogdan Khmel'nitsky 1st degree. Awarded with nine foreign orders. Author of several military-historical works and memoirs, articles in military magazines. Beloborodov Afanasy Pavlantieievich (18

(31). 01.1903-1.09.1990) was born in the village of Akinino,

Irkutsk province, in a family of peasants. He received his education in a rural school. In the Red Army since 1919.

During the Civil War, he fought in the Far East, a Red Army soldier, squad leader. In 1926 he graduated from the

Nizhny Novgorod Infantry School, in 1929 - the Military-Political Courses, in 1936 - the Military Academy named after M.V. Frunze. Since 1926 - the commander of a rifle platoon, then a political instructor of the company. During the fighting on the CER in 1929 he was the commander of a rifle company, he was awarded the Order of the Red Star. In 1936 he was appointed assistant chief, the next year - chief of the operational department of the headquarters of the rifle division. Since March 1939 - chief of the operational department of the headquarters of the rifle corps, and since June - chief of staff of the 43rd rifle corps. From January to June 1941, he headed the combat training department of the Far Eastern Front.

During the Great Patriotic War - commander of a rifle division, commander of a rifle corps. In May 1944 he was appointed commander of the 43rd Army, in August 1945 - commander of the 1st

Red Banner Army, lieutenant general, colonel general. Member of the battles near Moscow and Stalingrad, Velikoluki, Smolensk, Belorussian, Baltic, East Prussian, Manchurian offensive operations. In 1946-1953. - commander of the combined arms army,

then - head of the combat training department of the Ground Forces, head of the "Shot" courses, deputy commander-in-chief of the Central Group of Forces. In 1955 he was appointed commander of the troops of the Voronezh Military District, in 1957 - head of the Main Personnel Directorate of the USSR Ministry of Defense. Since 1963 - Commander of the Moscow Military District, General of the Army. Since 1968 - military inspector in the Group of General Inspectors of the Ministry of Defense. Hero of the Soviet Union. Cavalier of fifteen orders of the USSR, including five orders of

Lenin, five orders of the Red Banner, orders of Suvorov of the 1st and 2nd degrees, Kutuzov of the 2nd degree. Author of a number of memoirs, articles in military magazines.

Berzarin Nikolai Erastovich

(April 1, 1904-June

16, 1945) Born in St. Petersburg. In 1918 he entered the Red Army, a participant in the Civil War. He fought on the Northern Front, took part in the suppression of the Kronstadt uprising of 1921.

In 1923 he graduated from the command courses, in 1925 - machine gun improvement courses for the commanders of the Red Army "Shot" named after

the Comintern, in 1927 - again KUKS. He commanded a platoon, a company, was the executive secretary of the party bureau, assistant to the head of the combat training department. Since 1934 - Commander of the Primorsky Group of Forces. Since 1935 - commander and commissar of a rifle regiment, head of the department of headquarters of the Primorsky Group of Forces, division commander, corps commander of the Separate Red Banner Army. Member of the fighting on Lake Khasan (1938). Since July 1940 - Deputy Commander of the 1st Separate Red Banner Army of the Far Eastern Front. From May 1941 - Commander of the 27th Army of the Baltic

Special Military District. Member of the Great Patriotic War. Commanded armies. Since May 1944 - commander of the 5th shock army. The army

many operations, including the Berlin operation. Appointed the first Soviet commandant and head of the garrison of the city of Berlin. June 16, 1945 died in a car accident. Buried in Moscow. Colonel General. Hero of the Soviet Union. He was awarded two orders of Lenin, two orders of the Red Banner, orders of Suvorov 1st and 2nd degrees,

Kutuzov 1st degree, Bogdan Khmel'nitsky 1st degree, Red Star. Bogdanov Semyon Ilyich (17 (29). 08.1894-12.03.1960) Born in St. Petersburg in the family of a worker at the Obukhov plant. Educated in a real school. In 1916 he was called up for military service. Member of the First World War. He graduated from accelerated courses, ensign, platoon commander.

Awarded with the George Cross.

In the Red Army since May 1918. During the Civil War - commander of a rifle platoon, rifle company, rifle battalion. Awarded the Order of the Red Banner. In 1923 he graduated from the Higher Military Pedagogical School, in 1930 - Higher Tactical

Rifle Courses, in 1936 - Academic Improvement Courses at the Military Motorization Academy and commander of a rifle regiment, commander of a mechanized regiment, brigade. In 1937 he was appointed commander of a tank division in the Moscow Military District. In May 1938 he was arrested on **mechanization**. a false denunciation and was under investigation. Released from arrest on October 27, 1939. Appointed commander of the 9th mechanized brigade in the Western Special Military District. From March 1941 - commander of the 30th Panzer Division,

colonel.

Member of the Great Patriotic War. Participated in border battles. From September 1941 he was commander of the army, from - Deputy 1942 - commander of the 12th tank corps, later - commander of the 6th mechanized corps. From September 1943 - Commander of the 2nd Tank (from November 20, 1944 - 2nd Guards) Army. Successfully led troops in the battles near Moscow, Stalingrad, Kursk, in Chernihiv-Pripyat, Korsun Shevchenkovsky, Lublin-Brest,

Warsaw-Poznan, East Pomeranian and Berlin operations. Since 1944 - Colonel-General of Tank Troops, since 1945 - Marshal of Armored Troops.

In the post-war years - commander of armored and mechanized troops in the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany, commander of a mechanized army, first deputy commander of armored and mechanized troops of the Soviet Army, armored commander of the mechanized troops of the Soviet Army, head of the Military Academy of Armored Forces. He made a significant contribution to the training of highly qualified command personnel. From May 1956

And

Mr. - retired.

Twice Hero of the Soviet Union (1944, 1945). He was awarded nine orders of the USSR, including the 1st class of Suvorov and the 1st class of Kutuzov.

Bogolyubov Alexander Nikolaevich
(29.05.1900-28.02.1956)

Born in the city of Cheboksary in a working-class family. He graduated from the 6th grade school, then worked at the factory. In 1918 he joined the Red Army. Member of the Civil War: platoon commander, company.

In 1920 he graduated from the Higher Military Staff School, in 1934 - from the MV Frunze Military Academy. He was chief of staff of a rifle regiment, since 1924 - commander of the regiment. After the academy, he was appointed deputy chief of staff of the rifle corps.

In 1936, he was sent to the newly created Academy of the General Staff, after graduating from which in 1938 he was left as a teacher there. Member of the Great Patriotic

War. In 1941 - head of the operations department, chief of staff of the 43rd Army of the Reserve Front. Member of the Moscow battle. In December 1942, he was recalled from the front to

Moscow and appointed Deputy Chief of the Operations Directorate of the General Staff. Since the spring of 1943 - chief of staff of the front. From November 1943 - Chief of Staff of the 1st

Ukrainian Front. Since the summer of 1944 until the end of the war - chief of staff of the 2nd Belorussian Front.

After the Great Patriotic War, Colonel-General A.N. Bogolyubov worked at the Military Academy named after M.V. Frunze. Since 1950

- Assistant Commander-in-Chief of the Far East. Since 1952 - Deputy Head of the Main Directorate of Combat Training of the Ground Forces. Since 1955 - in reserve. He was

awarded two Orders of Lenin, four Orders of the Red Banner, two Orders of Suvorov 1st class, orders of Kutuzov and Bogdan Khmel'nitsky 1st class. Boldin Ivan Vasilyevich

(15.08.1892-28.03.1965)

Born in the village of

Vysokaya in Mordovia. In military service since 1914. Member of the First World War, platoon commander, senior non-commissioned officer. In the Red Army since 1919: commander of a company, battalion, regiment, brigade. He graduated from the Comintern Higher Tactical and Rifle School of the Red Army Command Staff named after the Comintern (1922), advanced training courses for senior commanding staff at the M.V. Frunze Military Academy (1926, 1930), and the M.V. Frunze Military Academy (1936). In September 1939, he was commander of a cavalry mechanized group that participated in the Red Army's campaign in Western Belarus. From October

1939 - Commander of the Odessa Military District. Since July 1940 - Deputy and 1st Deputy Commander of the Western Special Military District.

Member of the Great Patriotic War. With the beginning of the Great Patriotic War, I. V. Boldin became the commander of the operational group. Being cut off from the main forces of the front, he withdrew his troops from the encirclement. In October - November 1941 - commander of the 19th Army, from November 1941 to February 1945 - commander of the 50th Army. From April 1945 - Deputy Commander of the 3rd

Ukrainian Front. Subsequently - Colonel-General. He was awarded two Orders of Lenin, three Orders of the Red Banner. Orders of Suvorov 1st class, Kutuzov 1st class, two Orders of the Red Star. Vasilevsky

Alexander Mikhailovich

(09/30/1895-12/5/1977)

Born in the village of Novaya Golchikha, located on the border of the Ivanovo and Kostroma provinces, in the family of a priest. In 1909 he graduated from the Kineshma Theological School (1909), studied at the Theological Seminary. With the outbreak of the First World War, he was sent to

Moscow Alekseevsky military school, which he graduated in 1915. He commanded a company, battalion, staff captain. In the Red Army since 1919. During the Civil War, he commanded a company, a battalion, and was an assistant regiment commander. He graduated from the courses "Shot" (1927), one course of the Military Academy of the General Staff (1937), from where he was

released ahead of schedule. In October 1937, he was appointed head of the department in charge of the operational training of senior officers at the General Staff, and concurrently - deputy head of the operational department. From May 1940 - First Deputy Chief of the Operational Directorate of the General Staff, from August 1941 - Chief of this Directorate and Deputy Chief of the General Staff. From June 1942 - Chief of the General Staff. In February 1945, he was appointed commander of the 3rd Belorussian Front, and on April 10, the troops of his front captured Koenigsberg.

After the victory over Germany, he was appointed in the summer of 1945 as commander-in-chief of the Soviet troops in the Far East operating against Japan. He managed to successfully solve this problem in September 1945. In March

1946, A. M. Vasilevsky again headed the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the USSR. From November 1948 he was the 1st Deputy, and from

March 1949 he was the Minister of the Armed Forces (Minister of War) of the USSR. After the section on February 25, 1950, the War Ministry into the Naval and War Ministries, he remained at the head of the second.

After the death of I.V. Stalin is appointed 1st Deputy Minister of War, and when a single Ministry of Defense is created on March 15, 1953, he becomes a simple deputy minister. In 1956 he was appointed Deputy Minister of Defense of the USSR for military science. In November 1957 he was dismissed and appointed chairman of the Committee of War Veterans. From January 1959 he was a member of the Group of General Inspectors of the USSR Ministry of Defense. Twice Hero of the Soviet Union. He was awarded two orders of ^ (Victory), many other Soviet and foreign orders. Author of the book "The Work of All Life".

Vershinin Konstantin Andreevich

Born in the village of Borkino, Arkhangelsk province. The son of a peasant. In the Red Army since 1919. Fought in Belarus against the gangs of Bulak-Balakhovich, participated in the suppression of the counter-revolutionary rebellion in the Voronezh province. After graduating from command courses, he commanded a platoon, company, detachment, battalion. In 1932 he graduated from the N. E. Zhukovsky Air Force Academy. In 1935, he passed the external exams at the Kachinsky school for the title of military pilot. Head of the Operational Department of the Aviation Brigade Headquarters, Squadron Commander of the Higher Tactical Flight Courses, Head of the Higher Command Aviation Courses for the Improvement of Flight Personnel, Colonel. With the beginning of the Great Patriotic War, he was appointed commander of the Air Force of the

Southern Front. Subsequently, commander of the 4th Air Army. In February 1943 - Commander of the Air Force of the Transcaucasian Front. After the liberation of Crimea, the

4th Air Army operated as part of the 2nd Belorussian Front, taking part in the Belorussian, East Prussian, East Pomeranian and Berlin operations. In 1946-1949. - Commander-in-Chief of the Air Force, Deputy Minister of Defense of the USSR. From June 1946 - Air Marshal. Since 1949 - commander of the Baku Air Defense District, a year later - commander of

the country's Air Defense Forces. In January 1957 he was again appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Air Force and Deputy Minister of Defense. Since 1959 - Air Chief Marshal. Since 1969 - in the Group of General Inspectors of the USSR Ministry of Defense. Hero of the Soviet Union (August 1944). Cavalier of sixteen Soviet and foreign orders, including three orders of Suvorov, 1st degree. Author of the memoirs "The Fourth Air Force", a number of articles in military magazines. Volsky Vasiliy Timofeevich (March 22, 1897-February 22,

1946) Born in Moscow. He was drafted into the Russian army in 1916. Member of the First World War, private. In the Red Army since 1919. Member of the Civil War. Political fighter, military commissar of the regiment, military commissar

divisions.

In 1926 he graduated from the MV Frunze Military Academy, in 1929 - advanced training courses for senior officers at this academy, in 1930 - armored advanced training courses for commanders. After that, he was appointed commander of the first mechanized regiment in the Red Army. Since 1932 - commander of the 6th separate mechanized brigade. Since May 1939 - assistant to the head of the Military Academy of Mechanization and Motorization of the Red Army named after I.V. Stalin for the combat unit.

From the beginning of the Great Patriotic War - assistant commander of the 21st Army and assistant commander of the Southwestern Front for auto-armored troops. From January 1942 - Deputy Inspector General of the Chief ABTU. From April 1942 - Deputy Commander of the Crimean and North Caucasian fronts for tank troops. From October 1942 - commander of the mechanized corps. From the end of March 1943, due to illness, he left the command of the corps. After recovering in June 1943, he was appointed deputy commander of the BT and MV of the Red Army. From August 1944 - commander of the 5th Guards Tank Army, which fought in the Baltic and East Prussia. Colonel General of Tank Forces (1944). He was awarded two orders of Lenin, two orders of the Red Banner, the Order of Suvorov 1st and 2nd degrees.

Vorobyov Mikhail Petrovich
(17 (29). 12.1896-12.06.1957)

Born in the city of Khasavyurt (Dagestan) in the family of a bank employee. Educated at a real school and at the Petrograd Mining Institute. In 1916 he was called up for military service and sent to the ensign school. Member of the First World War. Infantry squad leader. Twice wounded. Awarded with three orders.

In the Red Army since 1918. Member of the Civil War. Commander of a road and bridge company, engineer of the 13th separate rifle brigade, engineer of the 12th rifle division on the Southwestern and Caucasian fronts. Since

1923 - the commander of the combined engineering battalion. In 1929 he graduated from the engineering faculty of the Military Technical Academy, a year later - postgraduate studies at this academy. Since March 1932 - teacher,

then head of the faculty of the Military Technical Academy. In 1936-1940.
- Head of the Leningrad Military Engineering School,
major general engineer. From July 1940 - Inspector General

Engineering Troops of the Red Army.

During the Great Patriotic War - the head of the engineering troops of the Western Front, the commander of the 1st sapper army. From April 1942 - Chief of the Engineering Troops of the Red Army. He supervised engineering support in the battles of Stalingrad, Kursk and in the battle for the Dnieper. On behalf of the Headquarters, the Supreme Command went to the troops during the preparation and conduct of the Korsun-Shevchenkivskyi, Lvov-Sandomierz, Belorussian, Vistula-Oder and Berlin operations. From February 1944 - Marshal of the Engineering Troops.

In the post-war years - the head of the engineering troops of the Soviet Army. From April 1946 - Chief of the Engineering Troops of the Kyiv Military District. Since 1953, he was deputy head of the construction and quartering of the troops of the Ministry of Defense, head of the engineering troops of the Land Forces of the Soviet Armed Forces, then - deputy commander of the troops of the Baltic Military District for logistics. He was awarded nine orders of the USSR, including the Order of Suvorov, 1st degree. Voronov Nikolai Nikolaevich

(05/23/1899-28/02/1968) Born

in the village of Lesnoy,

a suburb of St. Petersburg. He was drafted into the Red Army in the spring of 1918. In the same year he graduated from the 2nd Petrograd artillery courses. Member of the Civil War: commander of a fire platoon of one of the Kronstadt forts, assistant commander of an artillery battery, battery commander. In August 1920, being wounded, he was captured by the White Poles. Released next spring. Since the summer of 1921 - commander of a howitzer battery, a year later - commander of a light artillery battalion. In 1924 he graduated from the

Higher Artillery School for Commanders, in 1930 from the Military Academy named after M.V. Frunze. Commander of an artillery regiment, from April 1934 - head of the 1st Leningrad artillery school (school). In 1936-1937. -military adviser in Spain. From March 1938 - Chief of Artillery of the Red Army, commander. Member of the fighting near the Khalkhin-Gol River, the Soviet-Finnish war. From the autumn of 1940 - first deputy chief

Main Artillery Directorate, Lieutenant General of Artillery. From July 19, 1941 - Head of the Main Directorate of Air Defense - Deputy People's Commissar of Defense, Colonel General of Artillery.

During the Great Patriotic War, from July 19, 1941, he was the head (commander) of the artillery of the Red Army and deputy people's commissar of defense. From January 1943 - Marshal of Artillery. From February 1944 - Chief Marshal of

Artillery. Since 1946 - Commander of the Artillery of the Armed Forces of the USSR. From the same year to 1950 he was elected a deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. Since 1950 - President of the Academy of Artillery Sciences. From October 1953 - Head of the Military Artillery Command Academy. Since October 1958 - in the Group of military

inspectors of the USSR Ministry of Defense. Hero of the Soviet Union (1965), holder of seventeen Soviet and foreign orders, including three orders of

Suvorov, 1st degree. Memoir author. Nikolay Alexandrovich

Gagen (March 12 (24), 1895-May 20, 1969) Born in the village of Lakhtinsky, now within the boundaries of St. Petersburg. In 1915 he graduated from the ensign school.

Member of the First World War, company commander, staff captain. In the Red Army since 1919.

During the Civil War, he commanded a platoon, company, battalion. He took part in the suppression of the

Petropavlovsk Cossack uprising (Kazakhstan) in 1921. In the interwar years he commanded a battalion, was a teacher at the Saratov school of reserve commanders. In 1929 he graduated from the Higher Military Pedagogical School. Since 1930 - regiment commander, assistant commander of a rifle division, head of the baggage and clothing supply of the Volga Military District, assistant head of the Kazan Infantry School. From July 1

In June 1941, the division under the command of N. A. Hagen took the battle with the enemy as part of the 20th Army of the Western Front in the Vitebsk direction. In July - August, she fought surrounded, broke through the enemy ring and retreated to the Dnieper with battles. From August to September, the division fought heavy defensive battles, holding back the enemy, who was trying to break through to Yelnya. For tenacity was

transformed into the 3rd Guards, and its commander was awarded the Order of Lenin. Subsequently, the division took part in the battles on the Leningrad and Volkhov fronts. From

January 1942 - commander of the 4th Rifle Corps.

After the end of the war, he commanded a rifle corps, from 1947 he was assistant commander of the Primorsky Military District, from 1953 - assistant commander of the Far Eastern Military District. Since 1959 - retired. Lieutenant General (1943). He was awarded two Orders of Lenin, four

Orders of the Red Banner, the Order of Suvorov 1st Class, two Orders of Kutuzov 1st Class, Orders of Bogdan Khmel'nitsky 1st Class, Suvorov 2nd Class, foreign orders. Galitsky Kuzma Nikitovich (12(24).10.1897-14.03.1973) was

born in the city of Taganrog.

He was called up for military

service in the spring of 1917, a non-commissioned officer, a participant in the battles near Riga and the Moonsund operation. Twice wounded. He was awarded medals and the George Cross. In the Red Army

since February 1918. During the Civil War - commander of a platoon, rifle company and battalion, chief of staff of a brigade. In 1922 he

graduated with honors from the Higher Rifle School, in 1927 - from the MV Frunze Military Academy. He held the positions of a teacher of tactics at the Military Academy, chief of staff of a rifle regiment, and commander of a rifle regiment. Member of the war with Finland. Since the spring of 1941 - major general.

From the beginning of the Great Patriotic War, K. N. Galitsky was the commander of the 24th Iron Samara-Ulyanovsk Red Banner Rifle Division, two-thirds of which he fought out of the encirclement in the Minsk region, "destroying up to 265 tanks, armored vehicles and other enemy equipment." Awarded the Order of the Red Banner. Then he commanded a rifle corps, was deputy commander of the 1st shock army, then commander of the 1st reserve army. Since September 23, 1943 - commander of the army. Member of the Battle of Moscow, Velikoluki, Nevel'sk, Gorodok, Belorussian and East Prussian operations. For the skillful leadership of the troops under

storming Koenigsberg on April 19, 1945 was awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet

Union. In the postwar years - the commander of the Carpathian, Odessa, Transcaucasian military districts, the Northern Group of Forces. Since 1946, Colonel General, since 1955 - General of the Army. In 1962 he

retired. Hero of the Soviet Union. Cavalier of twelve orders of the USSR, including the Order of Suvorov

1st degree. Gorbatov Alexander Vasilyevich (9 (21).

03.1891-7.12.1973) Born into a peasant family in the village of Pokhotino, Yaroslavl province. In 1912 he was called up for military service. Member of the First World War. For military distinctions, he was promoted to non-commissioned officer, awarded two

St. George's crosses and medals. In the Red Army since the spring of 1919. Member of the Civil War. Red Army soldier, platoon commander, cavalry squadron on the Southern Front, commander of a cavalry regiment and the Bashkir cavalry brigade

during the Soviet-Polish war. In 1926 he graduated from the cavalry command courses, in 1930 - advanced training courses for command personnel. Commander of a cavalry regiment, brigade of a cavalry division and a cavalry

corps. On October 15, 1937, on false charges, he was arrested and exiled to Magadan, where he worked in the mines and mines.

March 5, 1941 was released, acquitted and appointed deputy commander of the 25th rifle corps of the Kyiv Special Military District, brigade comm

During the Great Patriotic War - deputy commander of a rifle corps, commander of a rifle division, inspector of the cavalry of the South-Western direction, deputy commander of the army, commander of the rifle corps, commander of the 3rd Army, from June 29, 1944 - Colonel General. Member of the border battles of the battle of Stalingrad, the Oryol operation, the crossing of the Dnieper, the Belarusian, East Prussian and Berlin operations.

In the post-war years - the commander of the army, the military commandant of Berlin. From March 1950 - Commander of the Airborne Forces. Since 1955 - General of the Army. Since 1958 - inspector-advisor of the Group of General Inspectors of the USSR Ministry of Defense. IN

1946-1962 - Deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. In 1952-1961. - candidate member of the Central

Committee of the CPSU. Hero of the Soviet Union (April 1945). Cavalier of fourteen orders of the USSR, including the orders of Suvorov 1st and 2nd degrees, Kutuzov 1st and 2nd degrees.

Gordov Vasily Nikolaevich

(December 12, 1896-

August 24, 1950) Born in the village of Matveevka in the Menzelinsky district in Tatarstan. In the Russian army since 1915. Member of the First World War, senior non-

commissioned officer. In the Red Army since 1918. During the Civil War, he commanded a platoon, company, battalion, was an assistant to the commander of a rifle regiment. He took part in the struggle against the detachments of N. I. Ma

In 1925 he graduated from the courses of the senior command staff of the Higher Tactical School, in 1927 - the shooting and tactical courses "Shot" named after the Comintern, in 1932 - the Military Academy named after M.V. Frunze. In

the interwar years he was an instructor in the Mongolian People's Army, since 1927 he was an assistant commander of a rifle regiment, since 1932 he was an assistant to the head of the Combat Training Department of the Red Army, since 1933 he was the chief of staff of the Moscow Red Banner Military Infantry School. Subsequently, he held the posts of chief of staff of a rifle division, since 1937 - commander of a rifle division, since 1939 - chief of staff of the Kalinin military district, since 1940 chief of staff of the Volga military district.

With the beginning of the Great Patriotic War, Major

General V.N. Gordov became chief of staff, and then commander of the troops of the 21st Army of the Bryansk Front. From July to August 1942 - commander of the troops of the Stalingrad Front, who defended themselves on the outskirts of Stalingrad. From October 1942 - Commander of the 33rd Army of the Western Front. From April 1944 - commander of the 3rd Guards Army of the 1st Ukrainian Front, which conducted a number of successful offensive operations, including the Berlin and Prague operations. After the war, he commanded the troops of the Volga Military District for about a year. In November 1946 he

was dismissed, and on January 12, 1947 he was arrested and convicted. On August 24, 1950, the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the USSR sentenced him to death

punishment - shooting. The sentence was carried out on the same day.
Rehabilitated in 1954

Hero of the Soviet Union (1945). Colonel General (1943). He was awarded two orders of Lenin, three orders of the Red Banner, three orders of Suvorov 1st degree, orders

Kutuzov 1st degree, Red Star, foreign orders. Goryunov Sergey
Kondratievich
(25.09(7.10.1899-2.10.1967)

was born in the village of Ushakovka in Mordovia. In the Red Army since 1918. Participated in the Civil War on the Eastern Front, during the defeat of the detachments of Baron R. F. Ungern. Red Army soldier, military commandant, company and battalion

commander. In 1924 he graduated from the Borisoglebsk 2nd Air Force School, in 1927 - the Serpukhov School of Air Combat, in 1932 - the command department of the N. E. Zhukovsky Air Force Academy, in 1939 - advanced training courses for command composition at the Academy of the General Staff. He was an instructor pilot, commander of an aviation unit, commander and commissar of an aviation squadron, commander of an aviation brigade. Since 1938, the commander of the Air Force of the Kalinin Military District, since July - the head of the Main Directorate of Personnel of the Red Army Air Force, since 1941 - the commander of the Air Force of the Kharkov Military District.

During the Great Patriotic War - Commander of the Air Force of the 18th Army of the Southern Front, from November - Commander of the Air Force of the North Caucasian Military District, from July 1942 - Commander of the 5th Air Army. Participated in air battles in the Kuban, in the Belgorod-Kharkov operation, the battle for the Dnieper, Kirovograd, Korsun-Shevchenkovsky, Uman-Batosha, Yassy-Kishinev, Debrecen, Budapest, Vienna, Prague operations.

After the end of the war - the commander of the 17th, since 1949 - the 57th, since 1951 - the 69th air armies. Since 1956 - retired. Colonel General of Aviation (1944). Hero of the

Soviet Union (April 1945). Awarded the Order of Lenin, five Orders of the Red Banner. Orders of Suvorov 1st and 2nd degrees, Kutuzov 1st degree.
Grechko Andrey Antonovich (4
17.10.1903-26.04.1976)

Born in the village of Golodaevka, Taganrog District, Don Region. The son of a peasant. In the Red Army since 1919, a participant in the Civil War, private, junior commander of the 11th Cavalry

Division of the 1st Cavalry Army. After graduating from the cavalry school in 1926, he was commander of a platoon and squadron of the 1st separate cavalry brigade of the Moscow Military District. In 1936 he graduated from the MV Frunze Military Academy, in 1941 - from the Academy of the General Staff. From October 1938 - Chief of Staff of the Special Cavalry Division of the Belarusian Military District. In September of the following year, he participated in a campaign in Western Belarus. Since May 1941 - officer of the Operational Directorate of the General Staff, lieutenant colonel.

During the Great Patriotic War, from July 3, 1941 - commander of the 34th separate cavalry division of the Southwestern Front, from January 1942 - commander of the 5th cavalry corps, from March - commander of the operational group of troops of the Southern Front, from April - army commander. From October 1943 - Deputy Commander of the 1st Ukrainian Front. On December 15, 1943, he was appointed commander of the 1st Guards Army, which participated in the Zhytomyr-Berdychiv, Proskurov-Chernivtsi, Lvov-Sandomierz, East Carpathian, Moravian

Ostrava and Prague operations.

In the postwar years - the commander of the Kyiv military district. In 1946 he was elected to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. In 1953-1957. - Commander-in-Chief of the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany, since 1955 - Marshal of the Soviet Union. Since 1957 - Commander-in-Chief of the Ground Forces, Commander-in-Chief of the Joint Armed Forces of the since 1960 - Warsaw Pact countries. From April 1967 - Minister of Defense of the USSR.

Twice Hero of the Soviet Union (1958 and 1973). Cavalier of sixteen domestic and eleven foreign orders, including two orders of Suvorov of the 1st degree and two of Kutuzov of the 1st degree. Since 1952 - a candidate member, since 1961 - a member of the Central Committee of the CPSU, since 1973 - a member of the Politburo of the Central Committee

of the CPSU. Grishin Ivan

Tikhonovich (16.12.1901-20.06.1951)

Born in the village of Vnukovichi, Rosslavsky District, Smolensk Region. In the Red Army from July 1920. In 1922 he graduated from infantry courses, then, in 1928, the 3rd Western Infantry School, and in 1928 - the Ivanovo-Voznesensk Infantry School. As an infantry cadet, he participated in the suppression of the uprising in the Tambov province. Then he commanded an infantry platoon, a company, was the chief of staff of the battalion and

assistant to the 1st

department of the division headquarters. In 1936 he graduated from the MV Frunze Military Academy. He was appointed head of the department of the Central NPO School for the training of headquarters commanders. From September 1937 he served as chief of the 1st division of the headquarters of a rifle division, from December 1938 - chief of the 2nd division of the headquarters of the Moscow Military District. In October 1940 he was appointed commander of the 137th Rifle Division.

With the beginning of the Great Patriotic War, the 137th Rifle Division fought as part of the 13th Army of the Western Front in the Smolensk defensive battle. She was surrounded, but thanks to the competent and decisive actions of the commander, she was able to escape from the enemy ring.

From March 1942, I. T. Grishin was the chief of staff of the army. From June 1943 until the end of the war - commander of the 49th Army, first of the Western, then Bryansk, from April 1944 - of the 2nd Belorussian Fronts. Colonel General.

After the war, he commanded the 6th Guards Army, from July 1946 - head of the Combat Training Directorate of the Ground Forces. From February 1950 - Head of the Main Directorate of Combat and Physical Training of the Ground Forces.

Hero of the Soviet Union. He was awarded two orders of Lenin, five orders of the Red Banner, two orders of Suvorov 1st degree, orders of Kutuzov 1st degree and the Red Star, as well as a foreign order. Zhadov (Zhidov) Alexey

Semenovich (17 (30).

03.1901-10.11.1977) Born

in the village of Nikolskoye, Oryol province. He was called up for military service in the Red Army in 1919. After graduating from the Oryol

cavalry courses commanded a platoon, assistant squadron commander. In 1928 he

graduated from military-political courses, in 1934 - from the Military Academy named after M.V. Frunze. Chief of staff of a rifle regiment, head of the operational unit of a rifle division, deputy and chief of staff of a rifle corps, assistant inspector of the Red Army cavalry. From February 1940 - commander of the 21st Turkestan mountain cavalry division of the Central Asian military district, major general.

During the Great Patriotic War, he was commander of the 4th Airborne Corps, which operated as part of the 4th and 13th armies of the Western Front, chief of staff of the 3rd Army, commander of the 8th Cavalry Corps. Since October 1942 - Commander of the 66th (5th Guards) Army of the Stalingrad, Don, Steppe, 1st and 2nd Ukrainian Fronts. From September 1944 - Colonel General. He led troops in defensive battles near the Berezina and Sozh rivers, near Rogachev and Zhlobin in the initial period of the war, in the battles near Moscow and Stalingrad, in Belgorod-Kharkov, Kirovograd, Kremenchug, Zhytomyr-Berdichev, Lvov-Sandomierz, Vistula-Oder, Berlin and Prague operations.

In the post-war years, he graduated from the Higher Academic Courses at the Military Academy of the General Staff. He held the positions of Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Ground Forces for combat training, Head of the MV Frunze Military Academy, Commander-in-Chief of the Central Group of Soviet Forces, First Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Ground Forces. Since 1955 - General of the Army. Since 1969 - military inspector-adviser of the USSR Ministry of Defense. Hero of the Soviet Union

(April 1945), holder of fifteen domestic orders, including two orders of Suvorov 1st degree and Kutuzov 1st degree (order badge No. 3). Author of memoirs and articles in military magazines.

Zhmachenko Filipp Fedoseevich

(11/26/1985-06/19/1966)

Born in the village of Mogilno (Polesskoye) of the Korostensky district of the Zhytomyr region. In 1915 he was drafted into the Russian army,

private. From November 1917 - in the Red Guard, from February 1918 - in the Red Army. Member of the Civil War.

In 1922 he graduated from the Kharkov courses of military commissars, in 1923 - the Higher Tactical School, in 1926 - the Shooting and tactical courses for the improvement of the commanders of the Red Army "Shot" named after the Comintern. He held the positions of the military commissar of the regiment, assistant head of the school of the Chervony elders for political affairs, assistant commander of the regiment, commander and military commissar of the rifle regiment. Since 1937 - commander and military commissar of a rifle division, then - head of the department of headquarters of

the Kharkov military district. From March 1941 - commander of the 67th rifle corps. At the beginning of the Great Patriotic War, the corps operated as part of the Central Front, participated in defensive battles near Rogachev and Zhlobin, and in the Smolensk defensive battle. From October 1941 - Deputy Chief of the Kharkov garrison. From November he commanded a group of troops of the right wing of the Bryansk Front, from December he was deputy commander of the 62nd Army. From February 1942 - commander of the 3rd army of the reserve of the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command, from February - the 40th army of the Bryansk Front. Participated in the Voronezh and Voroshilovgrad defensive operations. From September 1943 - commander of the 46th Army, which participated in the Kharkov, Zhytomyr-Berdychev,

Kor-sun-Shevchenkovsky, Uman-Batosha, Yassko-Kishenev, Debrecen, Budapest, Prague operations. After the end of the Great Patriotic War, F.F. Zhmachenko in 1947 graduated from the VAK at the Higher Military Academy named after K.E. Voroshilov. He served in the positions of Assistant Commander-in-Chief of the TsGV, Deputy Commander of the Belarusian and Carpathian Military Districts, Chairman of the DOS

Hero of the Soviet Union (October 1943). He was awarded two orders of Lenin, four orders of the Red Banner, orders of Suvorov, Kutuzov 1st degree, two orders of Bogdan Khmel'nitsky 1st degree, orders of the Red Star, the Badge of Honor, foreign orders. Zhukov Georgy Konstantinovich

(19.11. (1.12) 1896-18.06.1974)

Born in the village of Strelkovka, Kaluga province, in the family of a shoemaker. In military service since 1915. Member of the First World War, junior non-commissioned officer, holder of two St. George's crosses.

In the Red Army since 1918, commander of a saber platoon and a cavalry squadron. He graduated from cavalry courses (1920), Leningrad advanced training courses for cavalry officers (1925), advanced training courses for senior officers (1930). From July 1937 - commander of the cavalry corps. From July 1938 - Deputy Commander of the Belarusian Military District. From the summer of 1939 - commander of the 1st army group, head of the military operations of the Soviet troops on the Khalkin Gol River. From June 1940 - Commander of the Kyiv Special Military District. Under his leadership, the troops of the district carried out an offensive operation against the territories of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina that belonged to Romania. From January 1941 - Chief of the General Staff, candidate member of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks, commander of the 1st rank, then army general. Member of the Great Patriotic War. Representative of the Headquarters of the

Supreme High Command. First Deputy Supreme Commander. The commander of the fronts, coordinated the actions of several fronts. On November 15, 1944, G.K. Zhukov replaced K.K. Rokossovsky as commander of the 1st

Belorussian Front, who conducted the Vistula, Oder and Berlin operations. On May 8, in Berlin, he signed the Act of unconditional surrender of Germany.

After the defeat of fascist Germany was completed, G.K. Zhukov was appointed Chief of Staff for the Administration of Germany from the Soviet Union; receives the third Star of the Hero (June 1, 1945); takes the Victory Parade in Moscow on Red Square.

In the spring of 1946, G.K. Zhukov was removed from his post for malfeasance. He is appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Ground Forces and Deputy Minister of the Armed Forces of the USSR. On June 9 of the same year, he was removed from the post of Commander-in-Chief of the Ground Forces and demoted to Commander of the Odessa Military District. At the same time, he was removed from the list of candidates for membership in the Central Committee of the CPSU. At the same time, a "trophy" case was launched against him, connected with the removal from Germany of a large amount of property.

use. In February 1948, a decree was signed appointing G.K. Zhukov commander of the second-rate Ural district.

Immediately after the death of I.V. Stalin, he was appointed First Deputy Minister of Defense, and then became an active participant in the arrest of L.P. Beria. February 9, 1955 G.K. Zhukov is appointed Minister of Defense of the USSR. On October 26, 1957, he was removed from the post of Minister of Defense, removed from the Presidium of the CPSU Central Committee and members of the CPSU Central Committee with the wording "for gross violations of Leninist party principles in the leadership of the country's armed forces", and on March 15 of the following year he was dismissed.

Four times Hero of the Soviet Union. He was awarded two orders ^ (Victory), many other Soviet and foreign orders. He dedicated his years of retirement to work on the book "Memoirs and Reflections". Zakharov Georgy Fedorovich

(04/23/05/1897-01/26/1957)

Born in the village of Shilovo,

Zolotovskiy district, Saratov in the province in the family of a rural teacher. Educated at the city vocational school. Conscribed for military service in 1915. Graduated from the Chistopol ensign school in 1916. Participated in a number of battles of the First World War, second lieutenant.

Since August 1918 - in the Red Army. The commander of a company, battalion, regiment on the Eastern Front. After the end of the Civil War, he graduated from infantry courses (1920), courses "Shot" (1923), the Military Academy named after M. V. Frunze (1933). He was the head of the military and economic supply of the division, deputy commander of the rifle division, and a teacher of tactics at the Military Engineering Academy of the Red Army. Having completed his studies at the Military Academy of the General Staff in the summer of 1939, he was appointed Chief of Staff of the Ural Military District, colonel.

Since the beginning of the Great Patriotic War, the chief of staff of the 22nd Army of the Western Front, since August 1941 - the chief of staff, since October the commander of the troops of the Bryansk Front, covering the Oryol-Tula and Lgovsk-Kursk directions, and since December, the deputy commander of the troops of the Western Front, participated in the counteroffensive near Moscow. In May

1942 appointed chief of staff of the North Caucasian direction, then the North Caucasian Front. From August - Chief of Staff of the South-Eastern (Stalingrad) Front. From October

1942 - Deputy Commander of the Stalingrad Front. From December 1942 - Deputy Commander of the Southern Front. In February 1943, he took command of the 51st Army, which liberated Rostov. In July, he was appointed commander of the 2nd Guards Army, which distinguished itself in breaking through the enemy defenses on the Mius and Molochnaya rivers, on Perekop, during the liberation of Sevastopol.

From June 1944 - Commander of the 2nd Belorussian Front, which participated in the liberation of Belarus, General of the Army. Subsequently - the commander of the 4th Guards Army, which successfully crossed the Danube, participated in the encirclement and destruction of the enemy's Budapest grouping. From April 1945 - Deputy Commander of the 4th Ukrainian Front. He led the combat operations of the front formations in the Prague offensive operation. In the postwar years - commander of the troops of the South Ural and Eastern military districts,

head of courses ^ (Shot), deputy head of the Main Directorate of Combat Training of the Ground Forces. Cavalier of ten orders of the USSR, including two orders of Suvorov 1st degree, Order of Kutuzov 1st

degree.

Zakharov Matvei Vasilievich
(5 (17) 08.1898-31.01.1972)

Born in the village of Voilovo, Tver province. From March 1918 - in the Red Army. He graduated from the 2nd Petrograd artillery courses, in 1918 - the Higher Moscow School of Staff Service. During the Civil War, he was commander of an artillery battery and division, assistant chief of staff of a brigade of the 10th Army of the

Southern Front. After the end of the Civil War, he graduated from the Kharkov

courses for command personnel, the faculty of supply, and then the operational faculty of the Military Academy named after M.V. Frunze, Chief, General the Military Academy of Staff. Assistant boss Organizational and Mobilization Department of the Headquarters of the Belarusian

military district. Since 1936 - commander of the 22nd Infantry Regiment of the 8th Infantry Division. From July next year - Chief of Staff of the Leningrad Military District. From May 1938 he was appointed Assistant Chief of the General Staff. Member of the fighting near the Khalkhin Gol River. In 1940 - Chief of Staff of the 12th Army, then Chief of Staff of the Odessa Military District, Major General.

During the Great Patriotic War - Chief of Staff of the 9th Army, the High Command of the North-Western Direction, Deputy Head of the Main Directorate of Logistics of the Red Army. From January 1942 - Lieutenant General, Chief of Staff of the Kaliningrad, then the Reserve, Steppe, 2nd Ukrainian, from July 1945 - Transbaikal

Fronts, Colonel General. Member of the Battle of Kursk, Kirovograd, Korsun-Shevchenkovsky, Uman-Botoshansky, Yassy-Kishinev, Debrecen, Budapest, Vienna, Prague, Khingan-

Mukden operations. From May 1945 - General of the Army. In the post-war years, head of the Military

Academy of the General Staff, Chief Inspector, Commander of the Leningrad Military District, Commander-in-Chief of the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany, Chief of the General Staff. Since 1959 - Marshal of the Soviet Union. Under his leadership, views were developed on the use of weapons of mass destruction, adjustments were made to the existing charters and instructions. One of the organizers of the delivery of weapons and troops to Cuba in 1962.

Twice Hero of the Soviet Union (1945, 1971), Hero of Czechoslovakia (1970), holder of twenty-six Soviet and foreign orders. Author of a number of works. Kazakov Vasily

Ivanovich (6 (18).

07.1898-25.05.1968) Born in the village of Filippovo, Nizhny Novgorod province, in a family of peasants. In military service since 1916, an ordinary infantry regiment of the Petrograd garrison. Member of the February Revolution of 1917. From the summer of next year - in the Red Army. After graduating from the 2nd Petrograd artillery courses, he took part in the Civil War, commanding a fire platoon, and then an artillery battery on the Northern and Western fronts.

In 1925 he graduated from the Military Artillery School, in 1929 - advanced training courses for command personnel, in 1934 - the Military Academy named after M.V. Frunze, in 1936 and 1939. - refresher courses at the Artillery Academy. Commander of an artillery battalion, commander of an artillery regiment, chief of artillery of a rifle division, then of a rifle corps in the Western Special Military District.

During the Great Patriotic War - chief of artillery of the 7th mechanized corps, 16th army, Bryansk, Central, Belorussian, 1st Belorussian fronts. Member of the battles near

Moscow, Stalingrad and Kursk, Belorussian, Vistula-Oder and Berlin operations. In the post-war years - commander of the artillery of the Group of Soviet

Forces in Germany, colonel-general of artillery. Since 1950 - deputy, a year later - first deputy commander, in 1953-1957. - Commander of artillery of the Soviet Army. In 1955 he was awarded the title of Marshal of Artillery. In 1958 he was appointed chief of the air defense of the Ground Forces. Since 1968 - military inspector-advisor of the Group of General Inspectors of the USSR Ministry of Defense. Hero of the Soviet Union (1945). Cavalier of thirteen orders of the USSR, including Suvorov and Kutuzov 2nd degree. Katukov Mikhail Efimovich (4 (17).

09.1900-8.06.1976) was born in the village of Bolshoe Uvarovo, Moscow province, into a peasant family. Member of the October armed uprising in Petrograd.

Since 1918 - in the Red

Army, private, then junior commander. Fought on the Southern Front. In 1922 he graduated from the Mogilev infantry courses, in 1927 - courses "Shot", in 1935 - advanced courses at the Military Academy of Mechanization and Motorization of the Red Army.

Commander of a rifle platoon, rifle company, head of a regimental school, commander of a training battalion, chief of staff of a tank brigade, commander of a tank brigade. From the summer of 1940 - commander of the 20th Panzer Division,

colonel.

During the Great Patriotic War - commander of the 20th Panzer Division, 4th (1st Guards) Tank Brigade, 1st Tank Corps, 3rd Mechanized Corps. In January 1943 he was appointed commander of the 1st Tank (1st Guards Tank) Army. Since April 1944 - Colonel-General of Tank Forces. Member of border battles, battles near Moscow and Kursk, operations to liberate Ukraine, Lvov-Sandomierz, Vistula-Oder, East Pomeranian and Berlin offensive operations.

In the postwar years he graduated from the Higher Courses at the Military Academy of the General Staff (1951). Commander of the armored and mechanized troops of the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany. Since 1955 - Inspector General of the Main Inspectorate of the USSR Ministry of Defense, Deputy Head of the Main Directorate of the Ground Forces. In 1959 he was awarded the rank of Marshal of the Armored Forces. Since 1963 - military inspector-advisor in the Group of Inspectors General of the Ministry of Defense.

Hero of the Soviet Union (1944). Cavalier of fourteen orders of the USSR, including two orders of Suvorov 1st degree and Kutuzov 1st degree.

Kolpakchi Vladimir Yakovlevich
(August 26 (September 7) 1899

- May 17, 1961) was born in Kyiv in the family of an employee. After graduating from the gymnasium, he entered the law faculty of Kyiv University, but in the fall of 1916 he was called up for military service. Junior non-commissioned officer on the Northern Front. Wounded twice, awarded three

medals. Since October 1917 - a Red Guard, a participant in the storming of the Winter Palace, battles with the White Guards on the Petrograd, Southern and Turkestan fronts. Then the commander of a rifle company, a rifle battalion, a separate detachment. In 1928

he graduated from the MV Frunze Military Academy, was appointed chief of staff, then commander of a rifle regiment. Since 1930 - chief of staff of the 2nd rifle division, the next year - commander of the 8th rifle division. Since the summer of 1936 - Deputy Chief of Staff of the Belarusian Military District. The next two years - military ^ 1st adviser in Spain. Awarded the Order of the Red Banner. Since the autumn of 1938, the commander of the 12th

rifle corps. In December 1940 he was appointed Chief of Staff of the Kharkov Military District.

During the Great Patriotic War, V. Ya. Kolpakchi - Chief of Staff and Commander of the 18th Army (October - November 1941), Chief of Staff of the Bryansk Front (December 1941 - January 1942), Commander of the 62nd (June - August 1942), 30th (from November 1942), 63rd (from May 1943), 69th (from April 1944) armies of the Southern, Bryansk, Western, Stalingrad, Don, Central, 1st and 2nd Belorussian fronts. Skillfully led the troops in the Moscow and Stalingrad battles, Bryansk, Belorussian, Vistula-Oder, East Pomeranian, Berlin operations. Lieutenant general.

In the postwar years, Vladimir Yakovlevich graduated from the Higher Courses at the Military Academy of the General Staff. Commander of the combined arms army, troops of the Northern Military District, Colonel General. In 1954-1961. - Head of the Main Directorate of Combat Training of the Ground Forces, from February 1961 - General of the Army.

Hero of the Soviet Union (1945). Cavalier of twelve orders of the USSR, including three orders of Suvorov 1st class and two orders of Kutuzov 1st class.

Died in a plane crash.

Konev Ivan Stepanovich

(12/28/1897-05/21/1973)

was born in the village of Lodeikino, Vologda province. He graduated from the parochial school and zemstvo school. In the spring of 1916, he was drafted into the army and sent to an artillery training team that trained non-commissioned officers. But instead of the front, Konev ended up in Moscow, where he met the February and October events of 1917.

In the Red Army since 1918; squad leader, commissar of an armored train, rifle brigade and division. In 1921 he participated in the suppression of the Kronstadt uprising.

After the end of the Civil War, he was appointed chief of staff of the People's Revolutionary Army of the Far Eastern Republic. In 1926 he graduated from the courses of the MV Frunze Military Academy and was appointed commander and commissar of a rifle regiment in Nizhny Novgorod. Since 1931 - division commander. In 1934 he graduated from the main faculty of the MV Frunze Military Academy, after which he commanded a division, then a corps in the Belarussian Military District. WITH

1937 - Deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. Since 1937 he has commanded the Special Group of Soviet Forces in Mongolia. Since 1939 - Commander of the 2nd Separate Red Banner Far Eastern Army. Since 1940 - commander of the Trans-Baikal, since January 1941 - the North Caucasian military districts. Lieutenant general. With the

beginning of the Great Patriotic War - commander of the army, from September 1941 - commander of the Western, Kalinin, North Western, Steppe fronts. From May 1944 he commanded the troops of the 1st Ukrainian Front, which participated in the Lvov-Sandomierz, Vistula-Oder, Lower and Upper Silesian, Berlin and Prague operations. After the end of the Great Patriotic War, he was

appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Central Group of Forces and High Commissioner for Austria. The following year, he becomes Commander-in-Chief of the Ground Forces and Deputy Minister of the Armed Forces of the USSR. Since 1950 - Chief Inspector of the Soviet Army, Deputy Minister of the Armed Forces of the USSR. Since 1951 he has commanded the troops of the Carpathian Military District. In December 1953, he was appointed chairman of the Special Military Presence of

the Supreme Court of the USSR, which on December 18-23 considered the case and sentenced L.P. Beria and his henchmen to death.

Since 1955, I. S. Konev again took the post of Commander-in-Chief of the Ground Forces and Deputy Minister of Defense of the USSR, and in May of the same year, after the creation of the Warsaw Pact Organization, he became Commander-in-Chief of its United Armed Forces. Involved in the suppression of the rebellion in Hungary in 1956. Since 1960 - in the Group of Inspectors General.

Twice Hero of the Soviet Union (1944 and 1945), March 30, 1945 was awarded the highest military order "Victory". In addition, his military merits were awarded two orders of Suvorov 1st degree and two orders of Kutuzov 1st degree. Hero of Czechoslovakia and Hero of Mongolia. He was also awarded seven Orders of Lenin, the Order of the October Revolution, three Orders of the Red Banner, the Order of the Red Star, orders and medals of many foreign countries, including Great Britain, the United States of America, France, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and Poland, became

honorary citizen of the cities of five states. He wrote two books of memoirs: "Notes of the Front Commander. 1943-1942" and "Forty-fifth".
Koroteev

Konstantin Apollonovich
(12.02.1903-4.01.1953)

Born in the village of Shcheglovka, Kharkov region. In the Russian army since 1916, private. In the Red Army since 1918. During the Civil War he fought on the Southern Front. In 1920 he graduated from the Saratov Infantry and Machine Gun Courses. Platoon commander, company.

After the end of the Civil War in 1924 he graduated from the courses of the middle command staff, in 1926 - the rifle-tactical advanced training courses for the commanders of the Red Army "Shot" named after the Comintern. Platoon commander, assistant company commander, rifle company commander, battalion commander, chief of staff of a rifle regiment, commander of a rifle regiment, chief of staff of a rifle division. Since 1938 - division commander. Member of the campaign of the Red Army in Western Belarus (1939) and the Soviet-Finnish war. From March 1940 - infantry inspector of the Leningrad Military District, from March 1941 - commander of the 55th Rifle Corps of the Kyiv

Special Military District. At the beginning of the Great Patriotic War, the corps participated in border battles as part of the Southwestern Front, in July - as part of the Southern Front. Since August - Deputy Commander of the 18th Army for Logistics. From October 1941 - commander of the 12th Army, which successfully operated during the Rostov defensive and offensive operations. Since March 1942 - Assistant Commander of the Southern Front. Since August - commander of the 11th Guards Rifle Corps. From September 1942 - commander of the 9th Army, whose troops participated in the battle for the Caucasus. Then he

commanded the 37th and 52nd armies. After the war - commander of the army. In 1947 he graduated from the VAK at the Higher Military Academy named after K. E. Voroshilov. He commanded the troops of the Trans-Baikal Military District. Since 1951 - Assistant

Commander of the

North Caucasian Military District. Colonel General. Hero of the Soviet Union (1945). Awarded three Orders of Lenin, four

Orders of the Red Banner, Order of Suvorov 1st class, three orders of Kutuzov 1st class, Order of Bogdan Khmelnytsky 1st class, foreign orders.

Kravchenko Andrey Grigoryevich

(11/18/1899-10/18/1963) was born

on the Sulimin farm in the

Kyiv region. In the Red Army since 1918, a participant in the Civil War. Infantry platoon commander, machine gun team leader.

In 1923 he graduated from the Poltava Infantry School, in 1928 - Military academy named after

M. V. Frunze. After the academy, he was appointed chief of staff of an infantry regiment.

Since 1930 - teacher of the Leningrad armored courses for the improvement of command personnel. From 1935 he taught at the Saratov Military Armored School. Since May 1939 - chief of staff of a rifle division, participant in the Soviet-Finnish war. From June 1940 - chief of staff of a tank division, from March 1941 - chief of staff of the 18th mechanized corps.

At the beginning of the Great Patriotic War, the corps ended up on the southern sector of the Soviet-German front, where the enemy initially conducted rather passive combat operations. From September 1941 - commander of the 31st tank brigade of the Western Front. Member of the battle near Moscow. From February 1942 - Deputy Commander of the 61st Army for Tank Forces, from April - Chief of Staff of the 1st Tank Corps, from July - Commander of the 2nd Tank Corps. Participated in the Battle

of Stalingrad. From January 1944 until the end of the war - commander of the 6th Guards Tank Army. This army successfully operated in the Korsun Shevchenko, Uman-Botoshansky, Iasi-Kishinev, Vienna, Prague and other operations.

In the summer of 1945, the 6th Guards Tank Army was redeployed to Mongolia, included in the Trans-Baikal Front and participated in the defeat of Japanese troops in Manchuria.

After the war, A. G. Kravchenko continued to command the army. Then he was commander of the armored and mechanized troops of a number of military districts. In 1954 - assistant to the commander of the Far Eastern Military District for tank weapons. Since October 1955 - in reserve.

Colonel-General of Tank Troops. Twice Hero of the Soviet Union (1944, 1945). He was awarded two Orders of Lenin, three Orders of the Red Banner, two Orders of Suvorov 1st Class, Orders of Bogdan Khmel'nitsky 1st Class, Suvorov and Kutuzov 2nd Class, foreign orders. Krasovsky Stepan

Akimovich (8 (20) 08.1897-21.04.1983)

Born in the village of Glukhi,

Mogilev province, in a family

of peasants. In May 1916 he was called up for military service. Private, corporal, non-commissioned officer. After finishing courses

radio telegraph operators - head of the radio station of the 20th Army Corps of the Western Front. Awarded with two medals. Since

October 1917 - a Red Guard. Member of the battles with the German troops near Pskov. During the Civil War, he was an aircraft mechanic, communications chief of the 33rd aviation detachment of the Eastern Front, commissar of an aviation detachment.

In 1926 he graduated from the Advanced Training Courses for Air Force Commanders, in 1936 from the N. Ye. Zhukovsky Air Force Academy. In 1926-1933. - commander of an aviation detachment, commander of an aviation regiment. Since 1936 - commander of an aviation brigade, commander of an aviation corps, head of an aviation base area. During the Soviet-Finnish war - the commander of the Murmansk Aviation Brigade and at the same time the commander of the Air Force of the 14th Army. From February 1940 - head of the aviation school. In June 1941 he was appointed commander of the Air Force of the North Caucasian Military District, Major General of Aviation. During the Great Patriotic War - on the Southern, Bryansk,

South-Western, Voronezh and 1st Ukrainian fronts. Commander of the Air Force of the 56th Army, Commander of the Air Force of the Bryansk Front, Commander of the 2nd and 17th Air Armies, Lieutenant General of Aviation, since February 1944 - Colonel General of Aviation. Member of the counter-offensive near Rostov, Moscow, Stalingrad, Kursk battles, Korsun-Shevchenko, Lvov-Sandomierz, Berlin and Prague operations. In the postwar years, Stepan Akimovich - commander of the Air Force of the North Caucasus, Far East, Moscow, Belarusian military districts, head of the Air Force

then

Academy named after Yu.A. Gagarin. Since 1959 - Air Marshal. He made a significant contribution to the rearmament of Soviet aviation, to the training of aviation command personnel. Since 1968 - military inspector-advisor. Hero of the Soviet Union (1945). He was awarded sixteen

orders of the USSR, including the orders of Suvorov 1st class, Kutuzov 1st class, Suvorov 2nd class. Kuznetsov Vasily Ivanovich (15.01.1894-20.06.1964) Born in the village of Usolka, Cherdynsky district, Perm region.

Served in the Russian army since 1915, second lieutenant.

In the Red Army - from August 1918. He graduated from the school of ensigns (1916), rifle-tactical advanced training courses for the command staff of the Red Army "Shot" named after. Comintern (1926), advanced training courses for command personnel (1929), a special faculty of the Military Academy. M. V. Frunze (1936). Member of the First World War on the Southwestern Front, head of a team of foot scouts. During the Civil War, the commander of a company, battalion and rifle

shelf.

Since 1924 - commander of a rifle regiment, division and corps of the Vitebsk Army Group of Forces. In 1938 he was appointed commander of the 3rd Army of the Western Special Military District.

With the beginning of the Great Patriotic War, the 3rd Army of the Western Front fought hard battles with superior enemy forces in border defensive battles. From August 1941 - Commander of the 21st Army of the Bryansk (September 1 - South-Western) Front, in October - November 1941 Commander of the Kharkov Military District. From November 2 - simultaneously commander of the 58th army of the reserve of the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command. From November 23 - Commander of the 1st Shock Army. From June 1942 V.I. Kuznetsov - Commander of the 63rd Army of the Stalingrad (from September 1942 - Don) Front, from November 1942 - Deputy Commander of the South-Western Front, from December 1942 - Commander of the 1st Guards Army of the same front (from October 1943 - 3rd Ukrainian), whose formations liberated the Donbass. Since December 1943 - Deputy Commander of the 1st Baltic Front. From March 16, 1945 - Commander

3rd shock army, which in mid-March was withdrawn to the reserve of the 1st Belorussian Front. In the Berlin offensive operation, the army advanced as part of the front's main strike force. After the war -

commander of the 3rd shock army. Since 1948 - Chairman of the Central Council of the DOSARM (since August 1951 - the USSR). Since 1953 - Commander of the Volga Military District. From June 1957, he conducted scientific work at the General Staff. Since September 1960 - retired. Hero of the

Soviet Union (1945). He was awarded 2 orders of Lenin, 5 orders of the Red Banner, 2 orders of Suvorov 1st degree, medals, as well as foreign orders. Kurochkin Pavel Alekseevich

(6 (19) 11.1900-1989) Born
in the village of

Gornevo, Smolensk province. He received his education in a rural school. He worked for hire in Smolensk, then in Petrograd. He claimed that in the days of the October Revolution of 1917 he was in the ranks of the Red Guards who stormed the Winter Palace. During the Civil War - a Red Army soldier, a participant in the battles near Petrograd. In 1923 he graduated

from the Higher Cavalry School, in 1932 - the Military Academy named after M.V. Frunze, a year later - an adjunct under it, in 1940 - the Military Academy of the General Staff. He held the positions of chief of the divisional school for junior officers, chief of staff of a cavalry regiment, senior tactical leader of the M.V. Frunze Military Academy, chief of staff and commander of a cavalry brigade. Since 1935 - commander of the 6th Cavalry Division. In 1939 he was appointed chief of staff of the 2nd Cavalry Corps, major general. During the Soviet-Finnish War, he commanded the 28th Rifle Corps, which, on the ice of the Gulf of Finland, went to the rear of the enemy's Vyborg grouping and cut its communications. Awarded the Order of Lenin. From the summer of 1940 - commander of the 1st Army Group, then the troops of the Trans-Baikal and Oryol military districts, lieutenant general. He made a great contribution to the formation of reserve units and formations, the training of conscripts.

During the Great Patriotic War - Commander of the 20th Army in the Battle of Smolensk, representative of the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command on the North-Western Front, Deputy Commander and Commander of the troops of this front, commander of the 11th and 34th armies in the Demyansk operation. From December 1943 - Deputy Commander of the 1st Ukrainian Front. Supervised the preparation and conduct of the Korsun-Shevchenko operation. Since February 1944 - Commander of the 2nd Belorussian Front, then Commander of the 60th Army, Colonel General. Member of the Lviv-Sandomierz, Vistula-Oder, Moravian-Ostrava and Prague operations. In the post-war years - commander of the troops of the Kuban military district, deputy commander-in-chief of the

Soviet troops in Germany, assistant commander-in-chief of troops in the Far East for combat training, deputy head of the Military Academy of the General Staff. In 1954-1968. - Head of the Military Academy named after M.V. Frunze, since 1959 - General of the Army. Subsequently - in a leading job in the Joint Command of the Warsaw Pact countries, a military inspector-adviser. Hero of the Soviet Union (1945). Cavalier of fourteen orders of the USSR, including the Order of Suvorov of the 1st degree and two orders of Kutuzov of the 1st degree. Lelyushenko Dmitry Danilovich (20.10. (2.11)

1901-20.07.1987) was born on the Novokuznetsky farm in the Don region in a peasant family. In the Red Army since the spring of 1918 - in the partisan detachment of B. M.

Dumenko, then - in the 1st Cavalry
Army. Junior Commander.

In 1921 he graduated from the courses of red commanders, in 1925 - Leningrad military-political school, in 1927 the Cavalry school of commanding staff, in 1933 - the Military Academy named after M.V. Frunze. Commander of a rifle platoon, rifle company, rifle battalion, rifle regiment, cavalry brigade. In the Soviet-Finnish war - the commander of a tank brigade. April 7, 1940 "for skillful actions and personal courage" was awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union. In the summer of 1940 he was appointed commander of the 1st Proletarian Moscow Division, major general.

During the Great Patriotic War - commander of a mechanized corps, deputy head of the Main Armored Directorate, commander of the 1st Guards Rifle Corps, commander of the 5th, 30th, 1st, 3rd Guards Combined Arms Armies, 4th Tank (4th Guards) Army. Member of the battles of the initial period of the war, the battles of Moscow and Stalingrad, the Battle of Kursk, the Voroshilovgrad, Zaporozhye, Nikopol operations, the crossing of the Dniester, the battles in the Carpathians, the Lvov-Sandomierz, Vistula-Oder, Berlin and Prague offensive operations.

In the postwar years he graduated from the Military Academy of the General Staff. Commander of the mechanized army, armored and mechanized troops of the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany, Colonel General. Since 1956 - Commander of the Trans-Baikal and Ural Military Districts. Since 1959 - General of the Army. In 1960-1964 - Chairman of the Central Committee of the dosAAF.

Twice Hero of the Soviet Union (1940, 1945). Cavalier of sixteen orders of the USSR, including two orders of Suvorov of the 1st degree and two orders of Kutuzov of the 1st degree. Hero of Czechoslovakia

(1970). Luchinsky Alexander Alexandrovich (10

(23). 03.1900-1981) Born in Kyiv in the family of an officer. Without completing his studies at the Volsk Cadet Corps (it was disbanded in 1917), he passed an external examination for a matriculation certificate at a real school.

In the spring of 1919 he voluntarily joined the Red Army; platoon leader, then squadron leader. Awarded two Orders of the Red Banner. After graduating

from the Novocherkassk advanced training courses, he was the head of the regimental school of the 83rd cavalry regiment, since 1933 he was the chief of staff, two years later he was the commander of the 48th Kazakh cavalry regiment. He graduated in absentia from the Military Academy named after M. V. Frunze. In 1937-1938. - military adviser in China. From November 1940 - Chief of Staff, from April 1941 - Commander of the 83rd Mountain Rifle

Division. With the beginning of the Great Patriotic War, the division entered Iran. From October 1942, she was regrouped to the Transcaucasian Front. In April 1943 he was appointed commander of the 3rd Mountain Rifle Corps. WIT

May next year - commander of the 28th Army, Lieutenant General. Member of the fighting in the North Caucasus, Crimean, Belorussian,

East Prussian, Berlin operations. In the Soviet-Japanese War - Commander of the 36th Army of the Trans-Baikal Front, General colonel.

In the post-war years - Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany, commander of the troops of the Leningrad and Turkestan military districts. Since 1956 - General of the Army. Since 1958 - First Deputy Chief Military Inspector. Since 1964 - in the group of advisers-inspectors of the USSR Ministry of Defense.

Hero of the Soviet Union (April 10, 1945), awarded six orders, including three orders of Suvorov 1st class and Kutuzov 1st class. German Kapitonovich Malandin

(December 3(15), 1884-October 27, 1961) Born in the village

of Nolinsk, Novgorod Province, in the family of an official of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Graduated from the classical gymnasium. Studied at the Faculty of Law of St. Petersburg University. He was called up for military service in the spring of 1915. He completed an accelerated course at the Alexander Military School. Member of the First World War in battles on the Southwestern and Romanian fronts, half-company commander, company commander, corps headquarters officer, lieutenant. In the Red Army since May

1918. During the Civil War, he commanded a rifle regiment, was the military head of the Vyatka and Ufa provincial military commissariats. Since August 1921 - Chief of Staff of a separate rifle brigade, the next year - Chief of Staff of a rifle division. In 1926 he graduated from the courses of the highest commanding staff at the Military Academy named after M.V. Frunze. In 1930-1935. Chief of Staff of the Special Rifle Corps of the Separate Red Banner Far Eastern Army. The next two years - teaching at the Academy named after M. V. Frunze. After graduating from the Military Academy of the General Staff in 1938, he was appointed Deputy Chief of Staff of the Kyiv Military District for organizational and mobilization issues, Major General. Participated in the liberation campaign in Western Ukraine. WITH

September 1939 - Deputy Chief, from February 1941 - Chief of the Operations Directorate of the General Staff.

From the beginning of the Great Patriotic War, he was chief of staff of the Western Front and the Western Direction, then deputy chief of staff of the Western Front. From November 1941 - Head of the Department of the Military Academy of the General Staff, Lieutenant General. From December 1943 - Chief of Staff of the 13th Army of the 1st Ukrainian Front. He took part in the preparation and conduct of the Zhytomyr-Berdychiv, Sandomiro-Silesian, Lvov-Sandomierz, Lower Silesian, Berlin and Prague operations. After the war - Chief of Staff of the Central Group of

Forces (in Austria), Colonel General. In 1946-1948. - Chief of the General Staff - Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Ground Forces, General of the Army. In 1948-1952 and 1953-1955. - Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the USSR. From March 1955 to July 1956 - First Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Ground Forces. In subsequent years, the first deputy chief, and from June 1958 - the head of the Military Academy of the General Staff. Cavalier of ten orders of the USSR, including two orders of Suvorov

1st degree, Kutuzov 1st degree.

Malinin Mikhail Sergeevich

(16 (28). 12.1899-24.01.1960)

Born in the village of Polutino, Kostroma province, in a family of peasants. Graduated from the village school. He worked as a carpenter. In the Red Army since 1919. He graduated from the 2nd Moscow Infantry School in 1921, courses for command personnel in 1923, the Military Academy named after M.V. Frunze in 1931, academic courses at the Academy of Motorization and Mechanization of the Red Army in 1933 Commander of a rifle platoon, rifle company, head of a regimental school, commander of a rifle battalion, chief of staff of a rifle regiment, head of the operational department of the headquarters of a rifle division in the Moscow Military District, head of the department of headquarters of the Ukrainian Military District, commander of a mechanized brigade in the Trans-Baikal Military District. During the Soviet-Finnish war, he was the head of the operational

department of the headquarters of the 7th Army. From April 1940 - Chief of Staff of

During the Great Patriotic War - Chief of Staff of the 16th armies of the Western Front,

Bryansk, Don, Central, Belorussian and 1st Belorussian fronts, major general, from December 1942 - lieutenant general. He took part in the preparation and conduct of operations in the defense of Moscow, the counter-offensive near Moscow and Stalingrad, in the Battle of Kursk, the crossing of the Dnieper, in the Belorussian, Warsaw-Poznan, East Pomeranian and Berlin operations. In the postwar years - Chief of Staff of the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany, Chief of the

Main Staff of the Ground Forces, Chief Inspector of the Soviet Army, Colonel General. In 1952-1960. - First Deputy Chief of the General Staff. From August 3, 1953 - General of the Army. Hero of the Soviet Union (May 29, 1945), cavalier of thirteen orders of the USSR, including two orders of Suvorov 1st degree and two

orders of Kutuzov 1st degree. Malinovsky Rodion Yakovlevich (11(23).11.1898-31.03.1967) Born in Odessa. In the autumn of 1915 he was called up for military service.

Private, participant in a number of battles of the First World War on the Western Front. Awarded with the George Cross. In 1916-1918. - in France as part of the Russian Expeditionary Corps. Marked with two combat medals.

In the Red Army since the spring of 1919. Member of the Civil War. Graduated from junior high school. Commander of a rifle platoon, commander of a machine gun team, chief of staff and commander of a rifle battalion. After graduating from the MV

Frunze Military Academy in 1930, he was appointed chief of staff of a cavalry regiment, then a cavalry division, and deputy commander of a rifle corps. In 1937-1938. - military adviser in Spain. Since the summer of 1939, he was a brigade commander, senior lecturer in the headquarters service of the M.V.

Frunze Military Academy, candidate of military sciences. From April 1940 - major general. On March 7, 1941, he was appointed commander of the 48th Rifle Corps of the Odessa Military District.

During the Great Patriotic War - commander of a rifle corps, commander of the 6th and 66th, 2nd Guards armies, deputy commander of the Voronezh Front, commander of the troops of the Southern, South-Western (3rd Ukrainian) fronts. From August 1944 - Marshal of the Soviet Union. He led troops in border battles, in the battle of Stalingrad, in the battles for the liberation of Donbass and Right-Bank Ukraine, in Iasi, Chisinau, Debrecen, Budapest, Vienna operations. In the Soviet-Japanese War - Commander of the Trans-Baikal Front. In the postwar years - Commander of the Trans-Baikal-Amur Military District,

Commander-in-Chief of the Far East, Commander of the Far Eastern Military District, Commander-in-Chief of the Ground Forces. From October 1957 to March 1967 - Minister of Defense of the USSR.

Twice Hero of the Soviet Union (1945, 1958), People's Hero of Yugoslavia (1964), cavalier of thirteen orders of the USSR, including ^ (Victory), two orders of Suvorov 1st degree, Kutuzov 1st degree.

Managarov Ivan Methodievich

(31.05. 1898 -

11/27/1981) Born in the village of Yenakiyevo, Donetsk region in Ukraine. In 1914 he was drafted into the Russian army. Member of the First World

War, scout. In August 1917 he joined the Red Guard detachment - commander of the Enakievo Red Guard detachment. Since February 1918 - in the Red Army. During the Civil

war commanded a cavalry regiment. In

1923 he graduated from the 5th Cavalry School named after S. M. Budyonny in Taganrog. As a cadet, he participated in battles against the detachments of N.I. Makhno in Ukraine, was wounded twice. Appointed commander of a cavalry platoon, since 1926 - secretary of the party bureau of the cavalry

regiment. In 1931 he graduated from the Military-Political Academy in Leningrad. He was appointed military commissar of a mechanized regiment of a cavalry division of the Belarusian Military District, then - commander and military commissar of a cavalry regiment of a cavalry division stationed in the city of Proskurov. Since 1938 - commander of the cavalry div

Far East, major general. From November 1941 - commander of the rifle corps of the Far Eastern Front.

In January 1942 he was transferred to the west and appointed commander of the cavalry corps of the Moscow Military District. From March 1942 - commander of the cavalry corps as part of the troops of the Western Front. From December 1942 - Commander of the 41st Army, from March 1943 - Commander of the 53rd Army. The army troops under his command participated in the Kalinin, North-Western,

Steppe, 2nd Ukrainian fronts in the Rzhev-Vyazemsky, Belgorod-Kharkov, Uman-Batosha, Iasi-Kishinev, Budapest and Prague offensive operations. The 53rd Army participated as part of the

Trans-Baikal Front in the defeat of the Japanese Kwantung Army. After the war, he commanded an army as part of the Transcaucasian Military District, from 1949 he served in the air defense forces. Since 1953 - retired. Colonel General (1945).

Hero of the Soviet Union (April 1945). He was awarded three orders of Lenin, three orders of the Red Banner, orders of Suvorov, Kutuzov and Bogdan Khmel'nitsky 1st degree, the Red Star. Novikov

Alexander Alexandrovich (6 (19)

11.1900-3.12.1976) Born

in the village of Kryukovo, Kostroma province. In the Red Army since 1919, he served in the 27th Volga Infantry Regiment, fighting against the White Finns and in Transcaucasia.

In 1921 he graduated from the infantry courses for commanders, three years later - courses ^ (Shot), in 1930 - the Military Academy named after M.V. Frunze. Commander of a platoon, company, battalion. Since 1933 - chief of staff of an aviation brigade, then commander of an aviation squadron. In 1938 he was appointed chief of staff of the Air Force of the Leningrad Military District. During the Soviet-Finnish War - Chief of Staff of the Air Force of the North-Western Front. Since 1940 - Commander of the Air Force of the

Leningrad Military District, commander. With the beginning of World War II From February 1942 - Deputy People's Commissar of Defense for Aviation, from March 17, 1943 - Air Marshal From May 1943 - Commander of the Air Force of the Red Army September 21, 1944 honored

rank of Air Chief Marshal. As commander of the Air Force and representative of the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command, he coordinated the combat operations of aviation on several fronts in the battles of Stalingrad and Kursk, in operations to liberate the North Caucasus, Ukraine, Belarus, the Baltic States, Poland, during the assault on Königsberg, in the Berlin operation and in the Soviet-Japanese war. Immediately after the

end of the Great Patriotic War, Air Chief Marshal A. A. Novikov, together with Marshal of the Soviet Union G. K. Zhukov, organized the removal of many material assets and personal belongings from occupied Germany. This became known to the relevant authorities, and then to I.V. Stalin. On the night of April 23, 1946, A. A. Novikov was arrested. By the verdict of the Supreme Court of the USSR, he was sentenced to five years in prison. He was also stripped of the military rank of Air Chief Marshal, the title of twice Hero of the Soviet Union, orders and medals. He spent almost six years in a remand prison, until February 1952. After the death of I.V. Stalin in May 1953, Alexander Alexandrovich was amnestied at the request of G.K.

rank of Chief Marshal of Aviation and was appointed commander of the Long-Range Aviation of the

USSR Air Force. In March 1955, A. A. Novikov was removed from his post. In January 1956 he was dismissed from the ranks of the Soviet Army. On August 6, he became head of the Leningrad Higher Aviation School of the Civil Air Fleet. Twice Hero of the Soviet Union

(April, September 1945), holder of fifteen Soviet and foreign orders. Author of memoirs and articles in military magazines.

Odintsov Georgy Fedotovich
(21.02. (6.03) 1900-1.03.1972)

was born in Voronezh in the family of a railway engineer. He was drafted into the Red Army in 1920. He took part in battles with the White Guards as part of the Krasnodar Special Forces Detachment on the Southern and Caucasian fronts. In

1923 he graduated from the Krasnodar artillery command courses, in 1927 he graduated from the Kiev United School of Red Commanders,

1934 - Military Academy named after F. E. Dzerzhinsky. He served in the positions of commander of a fire platoon, political instructor of an artillery battery, commander of an artillery battery, assistant chief of staff of an artillery regiment. Since 1934 - head of the regimental school of the artillery regiment of the Moscow Proletarian Rifle Division, then head of the educational department of the faculty of the Military Artillery Academy, head of the department of tactics. Since 1940 - commander of an artillery regiment in the Leningrad Military District, colonel. During the Great Patriotic War -

commander of the Luga artillery group, chief of staff of artillery of the 54th Army, chief of artillery of this army, chief of staff of artillery of the Leningrad Front, commander of artillery of the front. Major General of Artillery. Since May 1944 - lieutenant general of artillery. He ended the war in East Prussia, directing artillery during the liquidation of the enemy's Courland grouping. In the first post-war years - commander of the artillery of the Leningrad Military District. In

1947-1953. - Commander of artillery of the Far East troops, colonel-general of artillery. In 1953-1968. - Head of the Military Academy named after F. E. Dzerzhinsky, since 1968 - Marshal of Artillery. Since July 1971 - military inspector-advisor of the Group of General Inspectors of the USSR Ministry of Defense. He was awarded eleven orders of the USSR, including the Order of Suvorov 1st class and the Order of Kutuzov 1st class. Papivin

Nikolai Filippovich (1903-19.04.1963) Born in the village of Golyadi, Klinsky District, Moscow Region. In the Red Army since 1920. In 1924 he graduated

from the 1st

United Military School named after the All-Russian Central Executive Committee in Moscow. Political instructor of the battalion, platoon commander, assistant commander of a machine gun company. In 1927 he graduated from the Vennno-theoretical school of the Air Force in Leningrad, in 1929 - Borisoglebsk Pilot School. Junior pilot, flight commander, commander and military commissar of a separate aviation detachment. In 1933 he graduated from the KUKS at the Air Force Academy named after Professor N. E. Zhukovsky. Appointed commander and commissar of a separate corps aviation detachment, since 1935 - commander

light bomber aviation squadron, assistant commander of a bomber aviation brigade, from August 1940 - commander of the 1st reserve aviation brigade.

During the Great Patriotic War, from June 1942 - commander of an assault aviation division, from September - deputy commander, from May 1943 - commander of the 3rd Air Army of the Kalinin Front. Then this army fought as part of the 1st Baltic, 3rd Baltic fronts, participated in the Smolensk, Nevelsk, Gorodok, Belorussian, Memel, East Prussian and other operations. After the war - Commander of the 10th Air Army, since 1949 - Deputy Commander-in-Chief

Air Force for Construction, Assistant Commander of the 30th Air Army, from February 1955 - Commander of the 34th Air Army, from May 1961 - retired.

Colonel General of Aviation (1944). Hero of the Soviet Union (April 1945). Awarded two Orders of Lenin, four Orders of the Red Banner, Orders of Suvorov and Kutuzov 1st degree. Died in a car accident. Peresyarkin Ivan Terentyevich (5 (18). 06.1904 -

10.12.1978) Born in the village of Protasovo, Oryol province, in a working class family. He was drafted into the Red Army in the spring of 1921. A Red Army soldier fought on the Southern Front. In 1922-1923. served in the

railway police. In 1923 he returned to the Red Army. In 1924 he graduated from the Military-Political School. Political instructor of the cavalry squadron, commander of a separate cavalry communications squadron of the 1st cavalry division. In 1937, after completing his studies at the Military Electrotechnical Academy of the Red Army, he was appointed Commissioner of the Leningrad Research Institute of Communications of the Red Army. From January 1938 - military ^ 1st commissar, from March 1939 - deputy head of the Communications Directorate of the Red Army. From May 10, 1939 - People's Commissar of Communications of the USSR. With the beginning of the Great Patriotic War - Head of the Main Directorate of Communications of the Red Army, at the same time - Deputy People's Commissar of Defense of the USSR and People's Commissar of Commun

- Marshal of the Signal Corps. At the same time, from 1941 to 1952, he was a member of the Central Auditing Commission of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks.

Since 1946, he has been the chief of communications of the Land Forces of the Soviet Army. Since 1957 - scientific consultant to the Deputy Minister of Defense of the USSR. A year later - in the Group of General Inspectors of the USSR Ministry of Defense.

He was awarded ten orders of the USSR, including the Order of Kutuzov, 1st degree. Petrov Ivan

Efimovich (September 18
(30), 1896-April 7, 1958)

was born in the city of Trubchevsk, Oryol province. In January 1917, he was called up for military service and sent to study at the Alexander Cadet School, after which he was released as an ensign.

In the Red Army since May 1918. Then he became a member of the RCP (b). Platoon and company commander, then member of the revolutionary tribunal of the division, commissar of the 17th cavalry regiment of the 11th cavalry division of the 1st Cavalry Army on the Eastern and Western fronts. He ended the civil war as a military commissar of the

63rd cavalry regiment. In 1926 he graduated from the advanced training courses for officers. Since 1929 - commander of the 2nd Turkestan cavalry regiment. In 1931, he graduated from the Courses for senior officers. The following year, he was appointed commander of the 1st Turkestan Mountain Rifle Division. In 1933-1940. - Head of the Tashkent Infantry School, Divisional Commander. Since June 1940 - commander of the formed mechanized corps.

During the Great Patriotic War - commander of the 25th rifle (Chapaev) division, then commander of the Primorsky Army, major general. Organizer of the defense of Odessa and Sevastopol. Later - Commander of the Black Sea Group of Forces, Lieutenant General. From May 1943 - Commander of the North Caucasian Front. From April 1944 - commander of the 2nd Belorussian, from August - 4th Ukrainian fronts. From April 1945 - Chief of Staff of the 1st Ukrainian Front. Under his leadership, a number of offensive operations were carried out. From October 9, 1943 - General of the Army, in March 1944 he was reduced in military rank to Colonel General, from October 26 he was restored to the rank of General of the Army. On May 29, 1945 he was awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union.

In the post-war years - Commander of the Turkestan Military District, Head of the Main Directorate of Combat Training, First Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Ground Forces. Since 1956 - chief inspector of the USSR Ministry of Defense, then chief scientific consultant to the Deputy Minister of Defense of the USSR.

Cavalier of fifteen orders of the USSR, including the Order of Suvorov 1st degree and Kutuzov 1st degree.

Petrushevsky Alexander Vasilyevich
(10/10/1898-10/21/1976)

was born at the Luninets station in Belarus. In the army since 1916, graduated from the Nikolaev Infantry School (1916), company commander, lieutenant.

In the Red Army since 1918. During the Civil War, he commanded a battalion, a rifle regiment. In 1923 he graduated from the Higher Tactical and Rifle School for Commanders of the Red Army named after the Comintern. Battalion commander, assistant and chief of the operational unit of the CHON

headquarters. In 1928 he graduated from the MV Frunze Military Academy. Head of the 1st part of the rifle division, then - the rifle corps. Since 1930 - a teacher at the Shooting and tactical courses for the improvement of the command staff of the Red Army "Shot" named after the Comintern. Since 1933 - teacher at the Military Academy named after M.V. Frunze, then - chief of staff of the division. In 1938 he graduated from the General Staff Academy. Appointed Deputy Chief of Staff of the Belarusian Special Military District, from May 1941 - Chief of Staff of the 13th Army of this district.

With the beginning of the Great Patriotic War, the army entered the battles, relying on the Minsk fortified area. Then she participated in the Oryol-Bryansk defensive, Yelets offensive, Voronezh-Voroshilovgrad defensive, Voronezh-Kastornenskaya offensive

operations, in the Battle of Kursk, the Oryol offensive operation, the battle for the Dnieper. Since December 1943 - commander of the 104th rifle corps of the 40th and 27th armies. The corps participated in the Iasi-Chisinau, Debrecen and Budapest operations. From March 1945 - commander of the 46th Army of the 2nd Ukrainian Front, which reached Prague.

After the end of the war - Chief of Staff of the Transcaucasian Military District (1946-1947), Senior Lecturer at the Higher Military Academy named after K. E. Voroshilov (1947), Chief Military Advisor to the Bulgarian People's Army (1947-1949), Chief of Staff of the Siberian Military District (1950-1953), chief military adviser to the PLA and military attache in China (1953-1957), head of the Military Diplomatic Academy of the Soviet Army. Since 1960 - retired. Colonel General. Hero of the Soviet

Union. He was awarded 3 orders of Lenin, 5 orders of the Red Banner, the Order of Kutuzov 1st degree, 2 orders of Suvorov 2nd degree, the Red Star. Pliev Issa Alexandrovich

(12 (25) 11.1903-6.02.1979)

was born in the village of

Old Batoko-Yurt (Ossetia). In 1922 he was drafted into the Red Army. Private of the Special Purpose Detachment of the Separate Caucasian Army. Participated in a

number of military actions. In 1926 he graduated from the Leningrad Cavalry School, in 1933 - the Military Academy named after M.V. Frunze, in June 1941 - the Military Academy of the General Staff. Since 1927 - course commander of the Krasnodar cavalry school, then chief of staff of a separate detachment, cavalry regiment, head of the operational department of the headquarters of the 5th cavalry division. In 1936-1938. - military adviser in the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Army. In the autumn of 1939 he was appointed commander of the cavalry regiment of the 6th cavalry division of the Belarussian (Western) Special

Military District. With the beginning of the Great Patriotic War - the commander of the 50th (3rd Guards) Cavalry Division, which in August - December 1941 carried out raids on the rear of the enemy in the Smolensk region and in the Moscow region. From December 1941 - commander of the 2nd Guards, from April 1942 - the 5th, then the 3rd and 4th Guards Cavalry Corps. In November 1944 - commander of the 1st cavalry-mechanized group on the Western, Southern, South-Western, Steppe, 3rd Ukrainian, 1st Belorussian, 2nd Ukrainian fronts. Member of the battles near Moscow and Stalingrad, Melitopol, Bereznegovato-Snigirevskaya, Odessa, Belorussian,

Budapest, Prague operations. Member of the Soviet-Japanese War. Colonel General

Since 1946, after graduating from the Higher Academic Courses at the Military Academy of the General Staff, he commanded the army, the troops of the North Caucasian Military District. From February 1962 - General of the Army. Then he was sent to Cuba by the commander of the Group of Soviet Forces. Since 1968 - inspector-advisor of the Group of General Inspectors of the

USSR Ministry of Defense. Hero of the Soviet Union (1945). Cavalier of fourteen orders, including two orders of Suvorov 1st degree, Kutuzov 1st degree. Author of a number of memoirs, as well as articles in military magazines on issues of military construction and military art.

Poluboyarov Pavel Pavlovich

(3 (15). 06.1901 - 09.17.1984) Born in Tula in the family of a craftsman. He was drafted into the Red Army in 1919. Member of the Civil War. Fought on the Southern and

Turkestan fronts. Red Army soldier, junior commander. In 1920 he graduated from infantry command courses, in 1926 - an armored vehicle school, in 1939 - the Military Academy of Mechanization and Motorization, in the spring of 1941 - advanced training courses at the Military Academy of the General Staff. In 1921-1932. - commander of a rifle platoon, commander of a rifle company in the Belarusian military district, commander of an armored division, chief of staff of a training tank regiment, senior officer of the headquarters of the Ukrainian military district. From December 1938 - head of the armored forces of the Trans-Baikal Military District. For the skillful leadership of subordinate troops and personal courage

shown in the battles near the Khalkhin-Gol River, he was awarded the Order of the Red Banner. From June 1940 - Deputy Commander of the 17th Army of the Trans-Baikal Military District. In January 1941 he was appointed head of the Armored Directorate of the Leningrad Military District, in March - Head of the Armored Directorate of the Baltic Special Military District.

During the Great Patriotic War - Deputy Commander of the North-Western Front for Tank Forces, Deputy Commander of the Kalinin Front for Tank Forces, commander of the 17th (since January 1943 - 4th Guards) Tank Corps in Voronezh, Yugo- Western and 1st Ukrainian fronts. Successfully solved management tasks

troops in the battles near Moscow, Stalingrad and Kursk, in the Lvov-Sandomierz, Vistula-Oder, Berlin and Prague operations.

In the post-war years - deputy, then first deputy commander of the armored and mechanized troops of the Soviet Army, colonel general of the tank troops. In 1954 he was appointed head of the armored (since 1961 - tank) troops of the Soviet Army. Since 1962 - Marshal of the Armored Forces. Since 1969 - military inspector-adviser of the Group of General Inspectors of the USSR Ministry of Defense. Hero of the Soviet Union (1945). He was awarded

sixteen orders of the USSR, including two orders of Suvorov 2nd class and two orders of Kutuzov 2nd class. Poplavsky Stanislav Gilyarovich (9 (22) 04.1902-9.08.1973)

was born in the village of Vendigany near Mogilev-Podolsk in the family of a village teacher, a Pole by nationality. In

the Red Army since 1923, a Red Army soldier, after completing the course of a regimental school, he was a junior commander. In 1930 he graduated

from the Kharkov Military School and was assigned to the North Caucasian Military District. He commanded a training platoon, then a rifle company, was the head of the Kharkiv school of Chervony foremen. In 1938 he graduated from the Military Academy named after M. V. Frunze, teacher, then senior teacher of tactics of this academy. Since May 1941 - head of the operational department of the headquarters of the 162nd Infantry Division. During the Great

Patriotic War - head of the operational department of the division headquarters, commander of the 720th rifle regiment, chief of staff of the 162nd rifle division on the Kalinin and Western fronts, colonel. From February 1943 - commander of a rifle division, commander of the 43rd rifle corps on the 1st and 2nd Belorussian fronts. In 1944, at the request of the Polish government, he was seconded to the Polish Army. Commander of the 1st, then 2nd Polish armies, lieutenant general. He led troops in the Belarusian, Vistula-Oder, East Pomeranian, Berlin operations. He finished the war with the rank of Colonel General.

Subsequently - commander of the military districts, deputy minister of National Defense of the Polish People's

Republic. In 1955 he returned to the Soviet Union, General of the Army, First Deputy Chief Military Inspector of the USSR Ministry of Defense. Head of a number of military exercises and maneuvers, inspection trips to the Far East and Transbaikalia. Since 1958 - military inspector-adviser. Hero of the Soviet Union (1945), holder of sixteen domestic and foreign orders, including Suvorov 1st class and two

orders of Kutuzov 1st class. Popov Vasily Stepanovich (January 8, 1894-June 2, 1967) Born in the village of Preobrazhenskoye near Tsaritsyno (now the Volgograd Region). In the Russian army since 1916, graduated from the school of ensigns,

ensign.

In the Red Army since 1918. During the Civil War, he served as assistant chief of staff of a division, from May 1920 - chief of staff, then assistant brigade commander, later - assistant chief of the 14th Cavalry Division of the 1st Cavalry Army. In 1922 he graduated from the Military Academy of the Red Army (later - the Military Academy named after M.V. Frunze), in 1929 - KUVNAS, in 1931 courses of one-man commanders at the Military-Political Academy. Since 1924 - commander of a separate cavalry brigade. Since 1928 - head of the Ukrainian cavalry school. From 1931 - commander of a cavalry division, from 1937 - commander of the 4th Cossack Cavalry Corps. Since July 1939 - at the teaching job at the Military Academy named after M.V. Frunze. But soon he was sent to the theater of the Soviet-Finnish war, awarded the Order of the Red Banner. At the end of 1940 he was appointed commander of the 28th Rifle Corps of the 4th Army of the ZapOVO. At the beginning of the Great

Patriotic War, the corps of V. S. Popov fought heavy defensive battles, moving away from Brest to Kobrin, Bobruisk. At the beginning of July, as part of the 4th Army, the corps was withdrawn to the front reserve and, after being understaffed, from July 15 continued to conduct defensive battles in the area of Propoisk (Slavgorod). In these battles, V. S. Popov was seriously wounded and, after being cured, in September 1941 he was appointed head of the logistics department of the 50th Army of the Brya

From January 1942 - Commander of the 10th Army of the Western Front. From April 1944 - Deputy Commander of the 1st Belorussian Front. From May until the end of the war, he was commander of the 70th Army of the 1st Belorussian Front. Army troops distinguished themselves in the Lublin-Brest, East Prussian, East Pomeranian, Berlin offensive operations. After the end of the war - commander of the 10th Guards Army of the Leningrad Military District. From November

1947, he was the head of advanced training courses for commanders of rifle divisions of the M. V. Frunze Military Academy, from June 1955, he was the head of the military history department for training officers of the armies of people's democracies. From the beginning of 1958 he was seconded to the General Staff, from 1959 he was retired. Colonel General.

Hero of the Soviet Union (April 1945), awarded two orders of Lenin, five orders of the Red Banner, two orders of Suvorov 1st degree, orders of Kutuzov 1st degree, Red Star. Pukhov Nikolai Pavlovich (01/25/1895-03/28/1958) Born in the village of Grishovo,

Bobyninsky district, Kaluga

areas. In 1916 he graduated

2nd Peterhof School of Ensigns. Member of the First World War, head of the mounted reconnaissance regiment. In the Red Army since 1918.

Member of the Civil War: adjutant of the regiment, chief of staff of the rifle brigade and rifle divisions.

In 1826 G. graduated from the tactical improvement courses for the command staff of the Red Army ^ (Shot" named after the Comintern, in 1935 - KUKS at the Military Academy of Mechanization and Motorization. Since 1924 - commander of a rifle regiment, since 1930 - at a teaching job, then head of the course at the shooting tactical courses "Shot", assistant head of the department of the Armored Directorate of the Red Army. Since January 1935, teaching at the Military Academy of Mechanization and Motorization of the Red Army. From April 1939 - teacher of the Military - on Economic Academy of the Red Army. From January 1941 - head of the training Department of the Quartermaster's Academy of the Red Army.

At the beginning of World War II, he was appointed commander of a rifle division. From January 1942 until the end of the war, he was commander of the 13th Army, which fought as part of the Southwestern, Bryansk, Central, and 1st Ukrainian Fronts.

After the war - commander of the army, since 1948 - commander of the troops of the Odessa, North Caucasus, since 1953 - the West Siberian, Siberian military districts. Since 1957 - chief military adviser to the Romanian People's Army. Colonel

General (1944). Hero of the Soviet Union (1943). He was awarded four orders of Lenin, three orders of the Red Banner, orders of Suvorov, Kutuzov, Bogdan Khmel'nitsky 1st degree, Suvorov 2nd degree, foreign orders.

Rokossovsky Konstantin Konstantinovich

(December 9 (21), 1896-

August 3, 1968) Born in the city of Velikiye Luki, Pskov province, in the family of a railway worker. Member of the First World War. Private, then non-commissioned officer of the 5th Kargopol Dragoon Regiment, awarded two St. George's Crosses.

In the Red Guard from December 1917. From September 1918 - as part of the 3rd, then 4th Ural divisions, he participated in battles with Kolchak's troops. Since May 1919 - commander of the 2nd cavalry division of the cavalry regiment of the 30th rifle division. He was awarded two Orders of the Red

Banner. After the end of the Civil War, he served in Transbaikalia in the 5th separate cavalry brigade. Then - instructor of the 1st Cavalry Division of the MNRA. Returning to Transbaikalia, in October 1928 he was appointed commander of the 5th separate Kuban cavalry brigade, with which he participated in battles on the CER. In 1930-1931 Commander of the 7th Samara Cavalry Division in the Belorussian Military District. In 1932, again in Transbaikalia as commander of the 15th Cavalry Division. In 1936 he was appointed commander of the 5th Cavalry Corps stationed in Pskov.

In August 1937 he was arrested. In March 1940, Rokossovsky's "case" was terminated, he was fully restored in his rights and offered to take command of the same 5th

cavalry corps. Since December 1940 - major general. Soon he was appointed commander of the 9th mechanized corps.

At the beginning of the Great Patriotic War, the 9th Mechanized Corps participated in the counterattack of the Southwestern Front in the Brody area. From July 11, 1941 - commander of the army group, then the 16th army on the Western

Front. On July 14, 1942 he was appointed commander of the Bryansk Front, and two and a half months later he took command of the Don Front, in 1943 - the Central Front, in 1944 - the 1st Belorussian Front. At the final stage

of the Great Patriotic War, he commanded the troops of the 2nd Belorussian Front. His troops participated in the East Prussian, East Pomeranian and Berlin operations, completing, together with other Soviet fronts, the defeat of the armies of Nazi Germany.

After the end of the war, Marshal of the Soviet Union K.K. Rokossovsky from 1945 to 1949 was the commander-in-chief of the Northern Group of Forces. In October 1949, at the request of the government of the Polish People's Republic, with the permission of the Soviet side, he was appointed Minister of National Defense and Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the PPR, he was awarded the military rank of Marshal of Poland, he was elected a member of the

Politburo of the Central Committee of the PUWP and a deputy of the Seimas. Upon returning to the USSR in 1956, K.K. Rokossovsky was appointed Deputy Minister of Defense, and from October of the following year, when the international situation worsened, he was appointed commander of the Transcaucasian Military District. In 1958-1962. He was Deputy Minister of Defense and Chief Inspector of the Ministry of Defense of the USSR. From April 1962 he became the general inspector of the Group of General

Inspectors of the USSR Ministry of Defense. Twice Hero of the Soviet Union (1944, 1945), Commander of the Order of ^ (Victory), seven Orders of Lenin, the Order of the October Revolution, 6 Orders of the Red Banner, Orders of Suvorov and Kutuzov 1st degree, twelve foreign orders. He was also awarded the Honorary Golden

Weapon with the image The State Emblem of the USSR Rudenko Sergey Ignat

(7 (20). 10.1906-1990)

Born in the village of Korop, Chernihiv province, in a working class family. In the Red Army since 1923. Three years later he graduated from the 1st Military Pilot School, in 1932 - the Air Force Academy named after N. E. Zhukovsky (command faculty), and in 1936 - the operational faculty of this academy. Since 1928 - a member of the CPSU (b). In 1927-1940. - pilot, senior pilot, commander of an aviation unit and an aviation squadron, a fighter aviation regiment, an aviation brigade. In June 1940 he was appointed deputy commander, in January of the following year - commander of the 31st mixed aviation division in the Far East. With

the outbreak of World War II, the division under his command was relocated to the Western Front, supporting the 29th Army in border battles. From October 1941 - Air Force Commander of the 61st Army, Major General of Aviation. Subsequently - Deputy Commander and Commander of the Air Force of the Kalinin Front, Commander of the 1st Operational and 7th Attack Aviation Groups of the Supreme Command Headquarters, Deputy Commander of the Air Force of the Southwestern Front. From October 1942 - Commander of the 16th Air Army, Lieutenant General of Aviation, from May 1944 - Colonel General of Aviation. Member of the battles near Moscow, Stalingrad, Kursk, Belorussian, Vistula-Oder, East Pomeranian and Berlin operations. In the post-war years - Commander

of the Air Force of the Belarusian Military District, Commander of the Airborne Forces, Chief of the General Staff of the Air Force, Commander of Long-Range Aviation, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Air Force. Since 1955 - air marshal. In 1958 he was appointed First Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Air Force, nine years later - Head of the Yu. A. Gagarin Air Force Academy. From August 1973 - military ^ 1st inspector-adviser of the Group of General Inspectors of the USSR Ministry of Defense. In 1961-1966. - candidate member of the Central Committee of the CPSU. Hero of the Soviet

Union (1944). Cavalier of fifteen orders of the USSR, including two orders of Suvorov of the 1st degree, orders of Kutuzov of the 1st degree and Suvorov of the 2nd degree. Rybalko Pavel

Semenovich (23.10 (5.11)

1894-28.08.1948)

Born in the village of Maly Istorop, Lebedinsky district, Sumy province, in a working-class family. He received his education in a rural school. He began his career at the age of fourteen. He worked in the field, then as an apprentice locksmith at one of the factories in the city of Sumy. Called for military service in autumn 1914. Member of the First World War. Private infantry regiment on the Northern Front. Twice wounded. Awarded with four medals.

In December 1917 he joined the Red Guard. Assistant commander of a partisan detachment operating in Ukraine. In the Red Army since 1919, he fought with the White Guards on the Southern and Western fronts, a participant in the Soviet-Polish war. Commissar of a rifle regiment, commissar of the cavalry brigade of the 1st Cavalry Army. In 1926 and 1930 graduated from the advanced training courses for command personnel, in 1934 - the Military Academy named after M. V. Frunze. Commander of a cavalry squadron, cavalry regiment, cavalry brigade, assistant commander of a mountain cavalry division in the North Caucasus Military District. In 1937-1940. - Military attache in Poland, then in China, major general. Since October 1940 - teaching at the Military Academy of the General Staff.

During the Great Patriotic War - Deputy Commander of the 5th Tank Army, Commander of the 5th Tank Army, Lieutenant General of the Tank Forces (from January 19, 1943), Commander of the 3rd (from May 1943 - 3rd Guards) tank army, colonel general of tank troops (since December 30, 1943). Participated in the Ostrogozhsk-Rossoshansk operation, the battles near Kursk, the Kiev offensive and defensive operations, the Zhytomyr-Berdichev, Proskurovo-Chernivtsi, Lvov-Sandomierz, Sandomierz-Silesian, Lower Silesian, Berlin and Prague offensive operations. From June 1945 - Marshal of the Armored Forces. In the postwar years - First Deputy Commander of the Armored and

Mechanized Forces of the Soviet Army, Commander of the Armored and Mechanized Forces. Under his direct leadership, a set of measures was carried out in the organization of this type of troops, its equipment with new equipment. Since 1946 - Deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

Twice Hero of the Soviet Union (1943, 1945). He was awarded ten orders of the USSR, including three orders of Suvorov 1st degree, the Order of Kutuzov 1st degree. Honorary citizen of Prague.

Sudets Vladimir Alexandrovich

(10 (23). 10.1904-6.05.1981)

Born in the village of Nizhnepetrovsk (a suburb of Dnepropetrovsk) in the family of a shipbuilder. He was drafted into the Red Army in 1925. Two years later he graduated from the Military-Technical School of the Air Force, and in 1929 - the school of military pilots. In 1932-1933. He underwent retraining at the advanced training courses for command personnel at the N. Ye. Zhukovsky Air Force Academy. Since 1929 - a pilot, then the commander of an aviation unit, a separate aviation detachment. In 1933-1939. - Commander of the Aviation Group of the Soviet Air Force in Mongolia. For the battles near the Khalkhin-Gol River, he was awarded the Order of the Red Banner. During the Soviet-Finnish war - commander of an aviation brigade, brigade commander. He distinguished himself during the breakthrough of the "Mannerheim Line" and in the battles for Vyborg. Marked with the Order of Lenin. In August 1940 he was appointed commander of the 34th aviation division, in November - commander of the 4th long-range bomber aviation corps, major general of aviation.

During the Great Patriotic War, V. A. Sudets - commander of the aviation corps, commander of the air force of the 51st Army of the Southern Front, commander of the Air Force of the Volga Military District, commander of the 1st bomber aviation corps of the North-Western, Bryansk, Voronezh, Leningrad fronts. From March 1943 - Commander of the 17th Air Army, Lieutenant General of Aviation, a year later - Colonel General of Aviation.

In the postwar years he graduated from the Military Academy of the General Staff. Chief of the Air Force Main Staff, Commander of Long-Range Aviation. Since 1955 - Air Marshal. In 1962-1966 - Commander-in-Chief of the Air Defense Forces of the country. He made a significant contribution to the formation of this branch of the Armed Forces. Since 1967 - military inspector-advisor in the Group of General Inspectors of the USSR Ministry of Defense. Author of a number of monographs and articles in military journals on the use of aviation in the new conditions of armed struggle.

Hero of the Soviet Union (1945). Cavalier of fifteen orders of the USSR, including the orders of Suvorov and Kutuzov 1st degree, Suvorov 2nd degree. People's Hero of Yugoslavia (1964). Hero of Mongolia (1971). Tolbukhin

Fedor Ivanovich (4 (16).

06.1884-10.17.1949) Born

in the village of Andronina, Yaroslavl province. He graduated from the St. Petersburg trade school, passed the exams externally for a commercial school. He was drafted into the army in December 1914. As a motorcyclist, he served in the troops of the North-Western Front. At the end of an accelerated course at the Oranienbaum officer school in July 1915, he commanded a company and a battalion. Cavalier of the Orders of St. Stanislaus and St. Anna. Headquarters captain.

In October 1918 he was enlisted in the Red Army. He served in the positions of assistant chief of staff for the operational part of the rifle division. For distinction in battles he was awarded the Order of the Red Banner. After the

end of the Civil War, he was appointed chief of staff of the 56th Infantry Division of the Petrograd Military District. In the autumn of 1926, he became a student of the Higher Academic Courses of the M. V. Frunze Military Academy, and in 1934 he graduated from the operational department of the academy. He was appointed chief of staff of the 1st Rifle Corps. In September 1937 he was appointed commander of the 72nd Infantry Division of the Kyiv Military District. From July 1938 - Chief of Staff of the Transcaucasian Military District. In

the first months of the Great Patriotic War, units of the troops of the Transcaucasian Military District were introduced into the northern regions of Iran. Since the end of 1941 - on the Soviet-German front. Chief of Staff of the Caucasian Front, from the end of January 1942 - of the Crimean Front. In connection with the failures in the Crimea on March 10, 1942, he was relieved of his post as chief of staff of the front and recalled to Moscow.

Soon after, he was appointed to the post of deputy commander of the Stalingrad Military District, and at the end of July he became commander of the 57th Army of the newly created Stalingrad Front. Tolbukhin's military activity in the Battle of Stalingrad was awarded the Order of Suvorov 1st degree and the assignment of the next military rank of lieutenant general.

After the end of the Battle of Stalingrad, in March 1943, he was appointed commander of the troops of the Southern Front, later renamed the 3rd Ukrainian Front. The troops of this front participated in the Belgrade, Budapest, Vienna operations. After the end of World War II, he commanded the Southern Group of Forces. In January 1947 he was appointed commander of the Transcaucasian Military District. Hero of the Soviet Union (1965). Hero of the

People's Republic of Bulgaria (1979, posthumously), holder of fifteen domestic and foreign orders, including the Order of Victory.
Trofimenko Sergey Georgievich (09/10/1899-10/16/1953)

Born in Bryansk. In military service since 1919.

During the Civil War - private, platoon commander, assistant chief and head of a machine gun team. Since 1924 - a military commissar of a rifle regiment. In

1926 he graduated from the shooting and tactical courses "Shot" named after the Comintern, in 1932 - from the MV Frunze Vienna Academy. Appointed Chief of Staff of the Rifle Division of the Volga Military District. Since December 1935 - Chief of the Operations Department of the headquarters of the Volga Military District. From July 1938 - Chief of Staff of the Zhytomyr Army Group of the Kyiv Special Military District, and from September 1939 - the 5th Army of the Ukrainian Front. Participated in a campaign in Western Ukraine. As deputy chief of staff of the 7th Army, he took part in the Soviet-Finnish war of 1939-1940. In August 1940 he was appointed Chief of Staff of the North Caucasian Military District, in January 1941 - Commander of the Central Asian Military District. During the Great Patriotic War, from August

1941 - commander of the 53rd Army, from March 1942 - commander of the 32nd Army of the Karelian Front. Since June 1942 - commander of the 7th separate army, directly subordinate to the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command, which defended the

line between Lake Ladoga and Onega along the Svir River. From January 1943 - commander of the 27th Army of the Western Front, whose troops took part in the Demyansk offensive operation. Subsequently, the troops distinguished themselves in the Belgorod-Kharkov operation, during the liberation

Ukraine, in the Iasi-Chisinau, Debrecen, Budapest, Balaton, Vienna operations.

After the end of the Great Patriotic War, from 1945 he commanded the troops of the Tbilisi Military District, from 1946 - the Belarusian Military District, from 1949 - the North Caucasian Military District. In 1953 he was dismissed. Colonel General (1944).

Hero of the Soviet Union (1944). Awarded four Orders of Lenin, three Orders of the Red Banner, two Orders of Suvorov 1st class, orders of Kutuzov and Bogdan Khmel'nitsky 1st class. Fedorenko Ivan Yakovlevich (10 (22).

10.1896-26.03.1947) Born

in the settlement of Tsareborisovo, Kharkov province, in a working-class family. In May 1915 he was called up for military service. Sent to the Black Sea Fleet. Member of the First World War. Awarded with three medals.

Since November 1917 - in the Red Guard. In May 1918 he joined the ranks of the Red Army. During the Civil War, he was the commissar of the headquarters of the 2nd Army, commissar, then commander of an armored train on the Eastern and Northern

fronts. Awarded the Order of the Red Banner. In 1924 he graduated from the Higher Artillery School for Commanders, in 1927 - Improvement Courses, in 1930 and 1934. - Training courses for one-man commanders at the Military Political Academy and the Military Academy named after M. V. Frunze. Commander of a division and regiment, an armored train, commander of a tank regiment in the Moscow Military District. From May 1935 - commander of a

mechanized brigade. From August 1937 he was the head of the armored forces of the Kyiv military district with the rank of division commander. On June 6, 1940, he was appointed head of the Armored

Directorate of the Red Army, lieutenant general of tank troops. During the Great Patriotic War, I. Ya. Fedorenko - commander of armored and mechanized troops, deputy people's commissar of defense. Participated in the development of plans, preparation and conduct of most of the operations. From February 1944 - Marshal of the Armored Forces.

Participated in the development of a plan of military operations in the Soviet-Japanese

In the post-war years - commander of the armored and mechanized troops of the Ground Forces of the Armed Forces of the USSR. Cavalier of

eight orders of the USSR, including the orders of Suvorov and Kutuzov 1st degree.

Fedyuninsky Ivan Ivanovich

(17 (30). 07.1900-10.17.1977)

Born in the village of Gilevo, Yekaterinoslav province, into a peasant family. In the Red Army since 1919, a Red Army soldier, a participant in the Civil War on the Southern and

Western fronts. In 1924 he graduated from the Vladivostok Infantry School, in 1931 - courses "Shot", in 1941 - advanced training courses for senior officers at the Military Academy of the General Staff.

Commander of a rifle platoon, during the conflict on the Chinese Eastern Railway in 1929 - commander of a rifle company of the 106th Sakhalin rifle regiment of the 36th rifle division, then commander of the rifle battalion of this regiment. Since summer

1938 - deputy commander of the 108th Belorechensky regiment, three months later the commander of the 24th motorized rifle regiment, in battles near the Khalkhin-Gol River. Was badly wounded. For the skillful leadership of the troops and personal courage, he was awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union, and was awarded the Order of the Red Banner of the Mongolian People's Republic. Since the autumn of 1939 - commander of the 82nd

motorized rifle division. In April 1941 he was appointed commander of the 15th Rifle Corps

of the 5th Army of the Kyiv Special Military District, major general. During the Great Patriotic War - commander of a rifle corps, commander of the 32nd, 42nd, 54th, 5th, 11th and 2nd shock armies, deputy commander of the Volkhov and Bryansk fronts, commander of the Leningrad front, lieutenant general. Member of border battles, battles for Leningrad and near Moscow, battles near Kursk, Baltic, East Prussian, East Pomeranian and Berlin offensive operations. In the postwar

years - Deputy, then First Deputy Commander of the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany, Colonel General. After graduating from the Higher Academic Courses at

Military Academy of the General Staff - Commander of the Arkhangelsk, Transcaucasian and

Turkestan military districts. Since 1955 - General of the Army. WITH 1965 Inspector Counselor to the Panel of Inspectors General.

Hero of the Soviet Union (1939). Cavalier of fifteen orders of the USSR, including two orders of Suvorov of the 1st degree and two orders of Kutuzov of the 1st degree. Hero of the Mongolian People's Republic. Author of a monograph, memoirs and articles. Khryukin Timofei

Timofeevich (06/21/1910-04/19/1945)

Born in the city of Yeysk,

Krasnodar Territory. In the Red Army since 1932. In 1933 he graduated from the Lugansk Pilot School. He served as a pilot, flight commander and squadron commander. Since 1938, he participated in the fighting in China as commander of a bomber aviation group. He was awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union. In 1939 and 1941 is studying at advanced training courses for commanding staff at the Academy of the General Staff. During the Soviet-Finnish war, he was commander of the Air Force of the 14th Army. Since May 1940 - Head of the Bomber Aviation Directorate of the Red Army, since July 1940 - Deputy Inspector General of the Air Force Inspectorate under the People's Commissariat of Defense of the USSR. In May 1941 he was appointed Air Force Commander of the 12th Army of the Kyiv Special Military District. Member of the Great Patriotic War. From August 1941 -

Commander of the Air Force of the Karelian Front. From June 1942 he was commander of the Air Force of the Southwestern Front. The troops of the front participated in the Battle of Stalingrad, in the destruction of the enemy grouping surrounded near Stalingrad. From July 1944

until the end of the war - Commander of the 1st Air Army. After the war he continued

to command the army. From August 1946 - Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Air Force for combat training, from July 1947 - Commander of the 7th Air Army, from 1949 - troops of the Baku Air Defense District, from September 1950 - Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Air Force for universities.

Twice Hero of the Soviet Union. He was awarded the Order of Lenin, three Orders of the Red Banner, Orders of Suvorov 1st and 2nd degrees, two Orders of Kutuzov 1st degree, Orders of Bogdan

Khmelnitsky 1st degree, Patriotic War 2nd degree, Red Star, foreign orders.

Tsvetaev Vyacheslav Dmitrievich

(01/17/1893-08/11/1950) was born

in the city of

Maloarkhangelsk, now the Oryol region. In 1915 he graduated from the Tiflis Military School. Member of the First World War, lieutenant. Company commander, battalion. In the Red Army since 1918. During

the Civil War, he commanded a company, battalion, regiment, brigade, division. In 1922 he graduated from the Higher Academic Courses and Advanced Courses for Senior Commanders at the MV Frunze Military Academy. Since 1931 - Senior Lecturer at the Military Academy named after M.V. Frunze. Since 1937 - division commander. In July 1938 he was arrested by the Special Department of the Trans-Baikal Military District, but in September 1939 he was released due to the termination of the case. He returned to the academy as a senior lecturer, and from January 1941 as head of the department of general tactics. With the beginning of the Great Patriotic War, he commanded the operational group of the 7th Army of the

Northern Front. At the beginning of 1942, he was appointed deputy commander of the 4th Army of the Volkhov Front. Since December 1942 - commander of the 10th reserve army, which was then transformed into

5th shock army. From the beginning of 1943, the 5th shock army was transferred to the 4th Ukrainian Front. From May 1944 he was deputy commander of the 1st Belorussian Front. In August, he headed the management of the 6th Army, which was in the reserve of the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command. From October 1944 until the end of the war - commander of the 33rd Army, which on October 18 was included in the 1st Belorussian Front. The army participated in the Warsaw-Poznan and Berlin operations. After the war -

Deputy, Commander-in-Chief of the Southern Group of Forces. From January 1948 to August 1950 - head of the Military Academy named after M.V. Frunze. Hero of the

Soviet Union (1945). He was awarded two Orders of Lenin, four Orders of the Red Banner, three Orders of Suvorov 1st class, orders of Kutuzov and Bogdan Khmel'nitsky 1st class.

Chanchibadze Porfiry Georgievich

(12/26/1901-03/14/1950)

Born in the city of Mikharidze in Georgia. He was drafted into the Red Army in 1921. In 1922 he graduated from the Georgian Joint Military School of Red Commanders (Tiflis). Participated in the liquidation of the armed formations of Colonel K. Cholokashvili in Khevsureti. Then - platoon commander and company commander in the 1st Georgian Rifle Division. Participated in the suppression of anti-Soviet movements in Svaneti. In 1927 he graduated from

the repeated advanced training courses for command personnel (Tashkent). Assistant Chief of Staff of the Regiment. Participated in the fight against armed formations in Adjara. Since 1930 - assistant chief of staff of a rifle regiment, since 1932 - battalion commander in the Far East. Then - the commander of the regiment. At the beginning of 1940, he graduated from the Higher tactical shooting courses for the improvement of the command staff "Shot", returned to the command of the regiment in the Far

East. Member of the Great Patriotic War since July 1941; division commander on the Western Front. As part of the Kalinin Front, the division participated in the Battle of Moscow, was renamed the 2nd Guards. From November 1942 - commander of the 13th Guards Rifle Corps, which fought as part of the Stalingrad, Southern, 4th Ukrainian fronts.

From June 1944 - commander of the 2nd Guards Army, which operated as part of the 2nd Baltic and 3rd Belorussian fronts. Participated in storming Koenigsberg, defeating the enemy in East Prussia.

After the war, since September 1945, in connection with the disbandment of the army, it was at the disposal of the Military Council of the Moscow Military District. From March

1946 - commander of the 11th rifle corps of the Moscow Military District. In June 1948 he graduated from the Academic Courses at the Higher Military Academy named after K. E. Voroshilov, and was appointed commander of the

13th Rifle Corps in the Gorky Military District. Hero of the Soviet Union (April 1945). Colonel General (1945). Awarded two Orders of Lenin, three Ord

Banner, orders of Suvorov 1st and 2nd degrees, Kutuzov and Bogdan Khmel'nitsky 2nd degree, Red Star.

Chernyakhovsky Ivan Danilovich

(16 (29). 1906-18.02.1945)

Born in the city of Uman in Ukraine, in the family of a railway worker. In the Red Army since 1924. In 1928 he graduated from the Kyiv Artillery School, in 1936 - the Military Academy of Motorization and Mechanization of the Red Army. He served as commander of a cavalry platoon, head of a topographic detachment, assistant commander of an artillery battery, commander of a reconnaissance battery, chief of staff and commander of a tank battalion. From May 1938 - commander of a tank regiment, then deputy commander of a tank division. In March 1941 he was appointed commander of the 28th Panzer Division of the Baltic Special Military District,

Colonel. With the beginning of the Great Patriotic War - the commander of the 28th tank division, reorganized into the 241st rifle division. From June

1942 - commander of the 18th tank corps. A month later, he was appointed commander of the 60th Army of the Western Front. On March 5, 1944, he was awarded the rank of colonel-general with the appointment of commander of the troops of the Western, then the 3rd Belorussian fronts. From June 26, 1944 - General of the Army, himself young in age in the Red Army of that time. He successfully led troops in the battles near Shauliai, Soltsy and Novgorod, in the Voronezh-Kastornoe operation, in the battle of Kursk and the Dnieper, in Kiev, Zhytomyr-Berdichev, Rovno-Lutsk, Proskurov-Chernivtsi, Minsk, Vilnius, Kaunas, Memel, East Prussian operations. He was mortally wounded while outflanking positions near the town of Melzak in East Prussia (now Poland).

Twice Hero of the Soviet Union (1943, 1944). Cavalier of nine orders of the USSR, including two orders of Suvorov 1st class and the Order of Kutuzov 1st class.

Chuikov Vasily Ivanovich

(31.01. (12.02) 1900-18.03.1982)

Born into a peasant family, in the village of Serebryanye Prudy, Venevsky district, Tula province, now an urban-type settlement

Moscow region. In 1917 he served as a cabin boy in a detachment of miners in Kronstadt.

Since 1918 - in the Red Army. In 1918 he graduated from the Moscow military instructor courses, in 1925 - the MV Frunze Military Academy, in 1927 - its oriental faculty, in 1936 - courses at the Military Academy of Mechanization and Motorization of the Red Army. Member of the suppression of the rebellion of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries in Moscow. From May 1919 - company commander, assistant regiment commander, regiment commander on the Eastern and Western fronts. He distinguished himself in the defeat of Denikin's troops and in the Soviet-Polish war. Awarded two Orders

of the Red Banner. Since 1927 - military adviser in China. According to the Chinese command, "a professionally trained commander who made a great contribution to the training of national personnel." In 1929-1932. - head of the department of headquarters of the special Red Banner Far Eastern Army, then head of advanced training courses for command personnel, since 1936 - commander of a mechanized brigade, from April 1938 - 5th rifle corps, in 1939 - commander of the 4th army of the Belarussian military district. During the Soviet-Finnish war, the commander of the 9th Army. From December 1940 - military attaché in China, then chief military adviser to the Chinese army. He remained in this position until March 1942.

During the Great Patriotic War - Commander of the 1st Reserve Army, Operational Group of the 64th Army, from September 1942 - 62nd (from April - 8th Guards) Army on Stalingrad, Donskoy, South-Western, 3- m Ukrainian and 1st Belorussian fronts. Led the military operations of the troops in the battle of Stalingrad, in operations to liberate the Donbass, Left-bank and Right-bank Ukraine, in the Lublin-Brest, Vistula-Oder and Berlin operations, colonel general. In the postwar years - Deputy, then Commander-in-Chief of the Group of Soviet Forces in

Germany, Commander of the Kyiv Military District, since 1955 - Marshal of the Soviet Union. Since April 1960 - Commander-in-Chief of the Ground Forces, Deputy Minister of Defense of the USSR, since 1964 - Head of Civil Defense, since 1972 - Inspector General of the Group of Inspectors General.

Twice Hero of the Soviet Union (1944, 1945), holder of twenty orders of the USSR and eight foreign ones, including three orders of Suvorov, 1st degree. Sharokhin

Mikhail Nikolaevich

(11/23/1898-09/19/1974)

was born in the village of Ivanovskoye, Yaroslavl region. In the Russian army since 1917, private. In February 1918, as part of the Red Guard detachments, he took part in battles with the Germans in

the Pskov region. In the Red Army since 1918. During the Civil War he commanded a platoon and a squadron. After the war - assistant commander and commander of a machine-gun squadron. In 1926 he graduated from the cavalry advanced training courses for commanders, was appointed head of the regimental

school. In 1936 he graduated from the MV Frunze Military Academy. He was appointed chief of staff of a light-bomber aviation brigade, from 1937 - commander of this brigade. Since 1939 - senior assistant to the head of the department, since 1940 of the Operations

- Department head

Directorate of the General Staff.

During the Great Patriotic War - Deputy Chief of the Operations Directorate of the General Staff, then - Deputy Chief of the General Staff. From February 1942 - Chief of Staff of the 3rd Shock Army of the Kalinin Front, from August - Chief of Staff of the North-Western, and from October - Volkhov Fronts. From October 1944 until the end of the war - commander of the 57th Army on the 3rd Ukrainian Front. Participated in the liberation of the Left-Bank Ukraine, the Budapest, Balaton and Vienna operations. Colonel General (1945). After the war - commander of the army, from April 1946 - head of department in the General Staff. From

December 1951 - Deputy Chief of the Military Scientific Directorate of the General Staff. From April 1953 - Head of the Department of Higher Educational Institutions of the USSR Ministry of Defense. Since April 1958 - military consultant of the Group of General Inspectors of the USSR Ministry of Defense. Since 1960 - retired.

Hero of the Soviet Union. He was awarded three orders of Lenin, four orders of the Red Banner, orders of Suvorov and Bogdan Khmel'nitsky 1st degree, Kutuzov 2nd degree, Red Star. Shafranov Petr Grigorievich

(01/09/1901-11/04/1972)

Born in the village of Bolshoe Frolovo in Tatarstan. In the Red Army since October 1919; Red Army soldier, flight commander, squad. He fought on the Western Front against the White Finns and the White Lithuanians, then against the

troops of Wrangel. In 1923 he graduated from the Saratov artillery courses. He was a gun commander, assistant artillery platoon commander, platoon commander, assistant battery commander. Since 1926, he studied first at the Kyiv, then at the Sumy artillery schools. Battery commander, head of the regimental school. Since 1930 - student, and since 1934 - adjunct of the Artillery Academy named after F. E. Dzerzhinsky. Since 1935, he served in the Main Artillery Directorate of the Red Army: engineer of the highest qualification, head of department. From July 1938 - head of the sector and head of the department of the Defense Committee under the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR. With the

beginning of the Great Patriotic War, from July 1941 - commander of an artillery regiment, from October - head of artillery of a rifle division on the Kalinin and North-Western fronts. From September 1942 - commander of the 16th Guards Rifle Division, which in March 1943 participated in the Rzhev-Vyazemsky offensive operation. Among the first, the division crossed the Volga and captured the city of Rzhev. Then in the

The 11th Guards Army of the Bryansk Front participated in the Oryol offensive operation. From September 1943 - commander of the 36th rifle corps. The corps participated in the Vitebsk-Orsha offensive operation, captured the city of Orsha. Then, during the Kaunas offensive operation, the corps successfully crossed the Neman River, freeing a number of settlements. From December 1944 - commander of the 5th Army of the 3rd Belorussian Front, then - the 31st Army of the 1st Ukrainian Front. Army troops distinguished themselves during the East Prussian offensive operation. In March 1945, they completed the liquidation of the encircled East Prussian enemy grouping. The army completed its combat path with participation in the Prague offensive operation as part of the troops of the 1st Ukrainian Front.

After the war in 1948, after graduating from the VAK at the Higher Military Academy named after K. E. Voroshilov, he was the commander of the united air defense forces of the district, since 1956 he was the head of the Military

Air Defense Command Academy, since 1959 - representative of the High Command of the Joint Armed Forces of the states - participants of the Warsaw Pact in the Hungarian People's Republic. Colonel General. Since 1965 - in reserve. Hero of the Soviet

Union. He was awarded two orders of Lenin, three orders of the Red Banner, orders of Suvorov, Kutuzov, Bogdan Khmelnitsky 2nd degree, foreign orders.

Shumilov Mikhail Stepanovich

(November 5, 1895-

June 28, 1975) Born in the village of Verkhnyaya Techa, Kurgan Region. In the Russian army since 1915. Member of the First World War. He graduated from the Chuguev Infantry School. Junior officer of a rifle company, ensign.

In the Red Guard since 1917, in 1918 he joined the Red Army. In the Civil War - the commander of a platoon, company, regiment. Fought on the Eastern and Southern fronts.

In 1924 he graduated from the Courses for senior and senior command and political staff, in 1929 - the shooting and tactical courses "Shot" named after the Comintern. He held the positions of commander of a rifle battalion, chief of staff of a regiment, since 1929 - commander of a rifle regiment, since 1933 - chief of staff of a rifle division, since 1937 - commander of a rifle division. Participated in hostilities in Spain in 1937-1938. From April 1938 - commander of the 11th Rifle Corps. He took part in a campaign in Western Belarus, in the Soviet-Finnish war. From July 1940

The 11th Rifle Corps under the command of Major General M.S. Shumilov became part of the 8th Army of the Baltic Special Military District. With the beginning

of the Great Patriotic War - a participant in the border battles in Latvia. From August 1941 - Deputy Commander of the 55th Army of the Leningrad Front, from January 1942 - Deputy Commander of the 21st Army as part of the South-Western (from July - Stalingrad) Front. From August 1942 until the end of the war - commander of the 64th (from April 1943 - 7th Guards) Army. Army troops participated in the defense of Stalingrad, the Battle of Kursk, the Battle of the Dnieper, the Krivoy Rog, Uman-Batosha, Iasi-Kishinev, Debrecen, Budapest, and Prague operations.

After the war - commander of the army, since 1948 - commander of the Belorussian, since 1949 - the Voronezh military districts. Since 1958 - retired. In 1958 he was returned to the Armed Forces and was appointed military consultant to the Group of General Inspectors of the USSR Ministry of Defense. Colonel

General (1943). Hero of the Soviet Union (1943). He was awarded three Orders of Lenin, four Orders of the Red Banner, two Orders of Suvorov 1st Class, Orders of Kutuzov 1st Class, Orders of the Red Star, "For Service to the Motherland in the Armed Forces of the USSR" 3rd Class, foreign orders.